

Miss Wilgrew 1796
LOVE in Distress:

OR, THE

Lucky Discovery.

A

NOVEL

Written by

The Honourable Lady

Maga
her

 *Amesbury*
 Book

L O N D O N :

Printed by W. Onley, for H. Newman in
the Poultry, S. Briscoe in Covent Garden,
and H. Neme in Cornhill. 1697.

Advertisement.

THere is now Published, Mr. Dennis's Miscellany Poems, with several select Translations from Horace, Juvenal, Mr. Boileau's Epistles, Satyrs, &c. and Æsop's Fables in Burlesque Verse: To which is added, the Passion of Byblis; with some Critical Remarks on Mr. Oldham; with other Letters and Poems.

Carpenter

79-46978

To my Dear

FLAVIA

MADAM,

THAT Time I stole from my
more Airy Diversions, I de-
dicated to this little Piece, and tho
my first design was not to have pub-
lished it, nor ever desired any Eyes
to encounter it, but yours, and my
own; yet for that Presumption I
lay it at your Feet, and beg your
Protection, with a Charitable En-
deavour to Peruse it with a partial
Eye, and excuse the first Sallies of
so unworthy a Pen; yet were I ca-
pable

The Epistle Dedicatory.

pable of producing the most deserving Volume in the Universe, I should be Ambitious of no Nobler a Patroness : For it is not the sound of a great many Titles that I covet, which, oftentimes like a hectoring Bully, makes a great Noise, with little or no Courage; not that I despise true Nobility, nor admire it farther then the Intrinsick Value.

I have nothing to plead for the Meanness of the Present, nor any Reasons for the many Objections you or any other may make, if you please to Criticise; only you have here the first Draught of sometimes a Pleasant, sometimes a Hypochondriack Brain, without ever rectifying; yet my dear (*Flavia*) accept of this humble Offering from a Friend, and afford it the Reading; some leisure Hour after the soft Message of your Lover's Sighs has been
whi-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

whispered to your Ears, and experimentally taught you, *Love* is not that Trifle to be ridicul'd at pleasure, but rather the most serious Business of our Lives; nor imagine it too foolish a Subject to entertain you, but reflect on the Sallies of your own Heart, and after mature Examination, if you find that youthful Bosom incapable of a tender Impression, I will readily submit to the most rigid Principle of the morosest Stoick; but pardon my Opinion, if I believe it impossible, and dare confidently affirm, so much Vivacity, Wit, Fire, and Beauty cannot be incapable of an honourable Sentiment: This is a sort of Natural Philosophy, at least a Woman's Philosophy, the only Theme they can Write of; and all these different Passions are agitated by Love, Scorn, Jealousie, Anger and Resentment, which if not display'd in their

The Epistle Dedicatory.

true Colours, consider the Author,
and force a Complaisance.

I would avoid all things in the
common Rode of Flattery, there-
fore I shun a Character I could be
very copious on, and only tell you,
If this Trifle has but the Influence
to effect a Smile from you, or the
good Luck to disperse some melan-
cholly Cloud that would eclipse the
Lustre of your Glorious Mind, I
shall have the utmost of my Hopes,
and esteem my self rewarded even
to the height of my Lavish Wish.

I could say a great deal in Com-
mendation of Love, what Effects it
has had over the profoundest Philo-
sophers, the most Judicious and
Learned, even those who have most
contemned that Passion, have been
delivered up to the most sensible
Touch of it; bring authentick Au-
thors

The Epistle Dedicatory.

thors to prove as much ; produce the wonderful Effects of it in these Days ; but that is not my part, I justify nothing, but leave it to your Mercy ; and if you do afford it your favourable Protection, I shall be proud I had the Occasion to shew my Choice in a Person of such singular Virtues, such nice and refined Sentiments, such inestimable Merits, and One whom ten thousand Advantages, besides that of Friendship, induces me ever to Subscribe my self,

Your Devoted Friend,

and Humble Servant,

CORINNA.

To

those to serve as much; produce
the wonderful Effects of it in these
Days; but that, not my part, I in-
flict nothing, but leave it to your
Mercy; and if you do find it your
convenient, I shall be
glad I had the Occasion to show
my Choice in a Person of such an-
cient Virtues, such nice and refined
Sentiments, such estimable Me-
rits, and one whom ten thousand
Angels, besides that of I know
him, induce me ever to subscribe

my self,

Your devoted Friend,

and sincere Servant,

CORLIAM

To

To CORINNA, on her
Novel entituled, *Love in Distress:*
or, *The Lucky Discovery.*

I Beg'd Apollo, that he would inspire,
For once, my Breast with such Poetick fire,
That I your Praise might to the World recite,
And show how much I value what you write:
But the ill-natur'd God did Aid refuse,
Envious at Moxis in a Female-Muse.
Spight of the Ghoule, boldly I'll pay a Muse,
Tho' I expose myself by what I write.

Your Lines are strong, so easy flows your Wit,
Your Verse so smooth, your Sence is so polite,
That you are sure the Muses Favourite.
To what a wondrous pitch in time you'l grow,
Who can such Judgment on a Trifle show!
Trifles indeed to what your Mind possess;
Proceed Corinna, and ne'r fear Success.

PHILANDER.

To

To my much-lov'd Sister,
Mrs. S. R. *alias*, my Sister the
Lady P. on her Novel entituled,
*Love in Distress: or, The Lucky
Discovery.*

T *How dare a Brother venture to commend
Your first Attempt, and say 'tis nicely
Assist me then, ye Muses, that I lose [pen'd.
Not one aspiring Thought which I could chuse.
That I, inspir'd by you, may add to Fame,
And celebrate my dear Corinna's Name.
Well, could I give her Merit just Desert,
Could I express the Dictates of my Heart,
But 'tis impossible, not all your Aid [Maid.
Can speak my Raptures of that Charming
And, oh! I blush, that to my own Disgrace
I want Assistance for a Sister's Praise;
Yet I'll not wonder, 'tis her lavish Store
Has bankrupt mine, and render'd me so poor.
Fain would I from a Character so true,
So natural, and well display'd by you,
Give injur'd innocent Canace her Due.*

De- }

Deplore the desperate Octavio's Fate,
Applaud that Turn of Fortune you relate,
With so much Passion, Eloquence, and Wit,
That whoe're reads must feel what you have
writ,

Let not one Character escape true Praise,
And crown each lucky Thought with golden
Bays:

But, oh! in vain I've only the Desire;
For your bright Flame puts out my weaker
Fire.

J. R.

To

STREPHON.

TO CORINNA, on her Novel
entituled, *Love in Distress* :
or, *The Lucky Discovery*.

(Train,
T He painted Grapes that drew the feather'd
Provok'd their hunger, but provok'd in vain :
Advancing near, they soon perceiv'd the Cheat,
And left, unsatisfied, the Fairy Tear.
Your lively Fancy does at once invite,
And feast our ravish'd Souls with true delight.
Strange Art ! that o're our Sence such pow'r
can gain,
To make us feel those Passions which you feign !
Their Adoration basely they misplace,
Who are enamour'd only on a Face ;
But conquer'd, and of Liberty bereft,
Your Captives have at least this Comfort left,
That honourably vanquish'd, we submit
To double Charms of Beauty and of Wit :
By these delightful Spells our Hearts are seiz'd,
Fond of our Chains, and with our Ruin pleas'd.
But when you dye, (as pity 'tis you must)
Instead of mouldring into common Dust,
As a Reward for your ingenious Pen,
The Muses have decreed, Corinna then
Shall mount to them, and make their number
Ten.

STREPHON.

LOVE in Distress :

OR, THE LUCKY DISCOVERY.

L *Isbon*, the principal City of *Portugal*, famous for its curious Traffick, and no less to be admired for the producing of Worthy and Brave Heroes ; amongst the rest, a Noble Youth (whose Extraction was derived from the most Illustrious *Sebastian*, the Nephew of *John the Third*, King of *Spain* and *Portugal*, who was unfortunately slain in the Field of *Alcazar* in *Affrick*) and whose Royal Virtues, and Heroick Actions, might worthily contain as many Volumes as our *Atlas* : But rather than derogate in the least from his acquired, and renowned Fame, I will omit all Circumstances of his Valour, and only recount the Amorous part of his Life, with Impartiality.

2 **Love in Distress : or,**

His Parents enjoyed all the Blessings of Peace, Honour, Wealth and Tranquility ; all the Comforts that the World, or Nature can bestow upon Mortals in this lower Sphere ; yet nothing added more to their secret Satisfaction and Felicity, than the springing Vertues, and Beauty of *Melantius*, which was the Name of this most Excellent Person. It was now he was attained to the Twenty third Year of his Age, and with that to all the Perfections, that a Soul stamp'd with the Image of a Deity, could be capable of : It was therefore no wonder if his Parents were thoroughly sensible of his Deserts, and knew how to set a considerable value on so inestimable a Jewel ; they feared that his Generous and Ambitious Humour, would prompt him forward to be acting something worthy of himself : And indeed he had often solicited them to permit him to assist the *Christians*, against the increasing Power of the Insulting *Turk*. He pleaded the Justice of the Cause, the Shame of an Unprofitable Life ; and, in short, he told them, his Soul glow'd within him, to be attempting that which he had often envied in other Brave-Men ; he urg'd that the Plenty of the World ought not to indulge a Man in Idleness ; he had recourse to the Emblem of the Bees, and their abhorrence of the slothful Drone ; He omitted no Argument that might prevail ;

The Lucky Discovery.

3

prevail; he feared no Danger, nor apprehended Fate, but begg'd he might have leave to try his Fortune where Glory was to be gotten, and not like a Dunghil-weed rot at the Spot he grew.

They heard, (and often blessed the Auspicious Hour that gave him Birth) but never could be brought to condescend, that he should launch for Fortune in the uncertain World: They told him, It was not the Just and Brave, that always reap the Benefit of their own Merits, for fickle Fortune is a Jilt, and often favours Fools and Knaves; yet found no Argument strong enough to diminish in the least, the aspiring Spirit of this Gallant Youth. At last they thought a Married Life the Infallible Remedy to secure the only Pledge of all their former Joys: He then found himself prest to Marry, his Relations having proposed to him a Match out of one of the Noblest Families in *Portugal*; her Name *Aspatia*, only Child to the Duke *Antonio de Almeyda*, a Lady whose Perfections, ballanced with her Quality and Fortune, had made numerous Captives of less amorous Souls than our *Melantius*.

It was a short Voyage down the famous River *Tajo*, that conducted him to the Scene of bliss, first under pretence of a complemental Visit; the Duke received him with an extraordinary and hearty Welcome, which

he return'd, by a grateful acknowledgment of his Favour.

The Duke to divert his Noble Guest, entertained him with a sight of his magnificent Palace, where he took great delight in viewing the unparallel'd Statues, and Paintings, and the curious Cielings, done by the most famous Masters of the Age. After he had satisfied his Curiosity, as well as he could in so short a time, the Duke led him into his Garden, which for the fine Scituation, and lovely Prospect, the Orange, Lemon, and Citron-Trees, continually in Blossom, Fruit of all sorts, and variety of all Flowers, pleasant shady Wildernesses, refreshing and artificial Fountains; and, in short, all that Nature or Art could render curious, made this exquisit Spot of Ground be justly termed the *Paradise of Portugal*.

Their wandering Steps led them into a retired Walk, where *Melantius* was surprized with the sight of a *Beauty*; and altho' the Jessamin-Hedges, which were very thick on each side, had eclipsed some part of her Charms; yet he had discovered so many Perfections, that he was resolved to approach this unguarded Fair; who, if Heaven had informed, with a Soul agreeable to her Body, he had no farther thought, than an intire resignation of himself: With these Contemplations he entred the Arbour, not observed

The Turkey Discovery.

served by the Duke, who was just turn'd to gather a Flower, which gave him opportunity to gaze, as one void of sence, upon this Lovely Fair. 'Twas at that Instant our young Enamourato's Thoughts were elevated beyond the Power of expression.

The Weather in those Climates is violent hot, especially that part of the Day, when the Sun is in the Center of the Zodiack; which so suffocates the Inhabitants, that they are willing to close with all advantages, that can render a Refreshment to their drooping Vitals: The same Motive induced this Charming Fair to receive the benefit of a soft still Wind, that whispered Content through all the lazy Air. She had a Slave, whom she was most secure in; but at this time she had dismissed her, that she might with greater freedom enjoy the liberty of sweet Contemplation: Love had been no stranger to her Heart, a Heart perhaps too apt to take the Impression; and what Person of the same Sex, that has ever experimented the least Power of that Triumphant Tyrant, but must acknowledge, that altho' to feed their fancy, and divert their melancholy hours; they may admit of a Confident, to treat with all advantage on the Object of their thoughts; yet there are some Transports of Satisfaction, that cannot be contained under any limit, but breaks out into

Raptures; which when vanished, dejected and surprized they even blame themselves for being an Eye-witness.

This place was all Retirement, secret and secure; none durst approach except the Duke, at some appointed hours, wherein she never failed to entertain her self with all the privacy and freedom her Heart could wish: At this time her Soul, wrapt in sublimer Meditations, had took its flight above all thought, and left the Body wholly bereft of sense or motion; a profound Sleep sealed her Eyes, and she appeared as divinely charming to the raviſht *Melantius*, as the vertuous and excellent *Lucretia* did, expos'd a Victim to her audacious *Roman* Lover; A sacred Silence seem'd to reign there, which secured her from all fears of Interruption, as in a Cave forsaken by wild Beasts in a Desert.

The ingenious contrivance of this Arbour rendred such satisfaction to the sight, that it unresistably allured the Beholders to a solitary retreat; it consisted of four delicate little square Beds of green Turf, on the farthest of which, lay this *Amazing Beauty*; her Head declining to the right side, supported by a Hand, that seem'd to be form'd of polish'd Alabaster, her Hair hanging carelessly mov'd at the discretion of a gentle Wind, the colour fair, compar'd to *Cynthia's* Silver Tresses.

The Lucky Discovery.

7

Tresses; she had on a pair of embroyder'd Bodice, her Bosom half open, with a large white Damask-Scarf wrought with Gold, which falling off her Shoulders, had circled in her Knees, and likewise hid the other Arm, her Breast whiter than Snow, but of a warmer Constitution, wrought wonderful effects in a young tender Heart resolved to love: The discovery of all these Charms, the powerful clearness of her delicate Complexion, was capable to make him surrender upon the first Assault.

You must imagine the unavoidable rustling that he made, soon expiated the drowsie God, who gently slipt his Chain, and gave his Captive leave to open her bright Eyes; then with a Face more serene and lovely than *Aurora*, she confirmed the languishing Expectation of her Amorous Lover, tho' the sudden confusion that seized every Faculty, at the approach of a Man, and a Stranger, dispersed a pleasing Blush throughout her Cheeks, and gave a ravishing lustre to her sparkling Eyes, which were blue, and full of Life. With what new fire this kindled him is unaccountable; for never was Lover at the height of his Wish, struck with a more acute Passion, than he was sensible of the first Minute; Fear, Pleasure, and a resenting Pity filled his Mind, to see her so severely astonish'd, that sometimes her Face, with

8 Love in Distress: or,

Shame was glowing red, then streight with Anger it grew pale.

Forgive me, Madam, (said he, with an Air full of concern) by unadvised steps, (tho' I must own 'twas not without design) I have inroached upon your Priviledges; charm'd with ten thousand Beauties, insensibly I did resort to this Retirement. Sir, (reply'd Aspatia, who had a little recover'd her self) I pray, no more; call not more Blushes to my Cheeks; but if you will restore my Peace, retire, and leave me to my innocent Retreat. Melantius, who could not brook this Command, with eager Transport threw himself at her Feet, then blessed his happy Genius which had been his Guide, and convey'd him to the Shrine of Chaste Diana, where he would offer up his pure Devotion.

While thus he spoke, she survey'd him round, view'd and review'd his Noble Meen, observed his Speech, his Air, his Person, in all which discovered Worlds of Pleasure. He was of a middle stature, well shap'd, the features of his Face were regular, black-ey'd, and languishing; his Hair was of a bright Ash colour, which was very long, and lay in folding Curles all o'er his Shoulders.

With strange amazement, and transport-ed thoughts, they did for a great while stand

The Lucky Discovery.

9

stand and gaze on one another. Then, then the little envious God of Love did clap his Wings, and rejoiced at the approaching Fate of these unhappy Lovers; but soon this pleasing Extravagance was diverted by *Aspatia*, whose Modesty recalled her surpris'd Spirits; then casting down her Eyes which were filled with Shame, she blam'd her most imprudent Curiosity, when she beheld *Melantius* Prostrate at her Feet, with Eyes that spoke too open and intelligibly the Circumstances of his Heart; yet forced a Smile to say, *Indeed you are too obsequious, too lavish of your Praise; and give me leave to impute these Favours, to that common face of Gallantry, that generally attends your Sex, rather than to your solid Judgment.*

By this time the Duke had recovered the Arbour; where he was surpris'd to find *Melantius* in a close Conversation with his Daughter, who appeared in great confusion; the Duke blamed his own Imprudence, in leading him that way, and as he entred the Arbour, excus'd himself, by telling her the agreeable Entertainment of that young Lord's Conversation, had wholly taken up his Consideration; therefore to compence for having interrupted her accustomed Retreat, (which he attributed altogether to himself) they would leave her to her freedom; and seeing *Laura* the Slave of fair *Aspatia*

Aspatia appear, the Duke thought fit to retire.

This sudden motion was something perplexing to *Melantius*, who could not depart without a great Regret, which he signified by his Looks, which were all Remorse. Immediately *Aspatia* withdrew to her Apartment, where, as soon as she enter'd, she threw her self carelessly on a Couch, and there sat very dull and pensive; *Laura* imagining it no other, but some little concern for the disorder she was surprized with in the Garden; approach'd her with a pleasing Look: *Come, Madam,* (said she) *banish this trifling Sorrow, here is that will make you soon assume your usual Gaiety; a Letter from the Count Octavio, Madam. From Octavio!* (said she, starting in a little disorder) *Give it me. But what means my foreboding Heart? Can any thing from that brave Man displease me? And yet I feel an unusual Shivering over all my Limbs, as some dire Omen of a future Misfortune!* She took the Letter with her trembling Hands, and having opened it, she Read as follows.

OCTA-

OCTAVIO to ASPATIA.

YOU see (dear Madam) how much I am yours, when even the Commands of my Prince, cannot detain me in Italy; nor the Threats of a Father induce me to Marry a Lady, whose Beauty has no Superiour but fair Aspatia's. I am the same constant Man, as when I left you, and only live to Adore you. What will my Fate produce? Cannot all my Sufferings, and the Sincerity wherewith I serve you, render me the most passionate of Lovers? Nor is it possible to reconcile the Duke, your Father, to a Stranger? Yet this is less my Care, then how I stand in the favourable Sentiments of the only Person I live by. I am now at Porto with all the Privacy imaginable, till I know with what Incouragement I may come to Lisbon. I shall wait with much impatience, to see the Characters of that fair Hand, from whom depends, the Life, Fortune, and Felicity of,

Madam,

Your Unchangeable Octavio.

During.

During the perusal of this Letter, the Commotions of her Mind was visible in her Face; and having concluded it, she fetch'd a deep sigh, and return'd to her pensive posture. After some time lifting up her troubled Eyes, she cry'd, *Ab! Laura, did I Love Octavio? Laura* smil'd at the oddness of the Question, and made no Answer; whilst she continu'd; *Was I not obliged in honour to make some return to him I owe my Life to? Nay more, the Life of him that gave me mine. But say I did advance too fast, too tenderly, forgive my Indiscretion, it was no more than Gratitude did prompt me to: But why these scrupulous Thoughts? Am I not the same Aspatia, young, free, and disingag'd? No, no, but he is still the Brave the Generous Octavio; and must not, cannot, will not be imposed upon.*

Tormented with a thousand different Thoughts, she past the residue of the Day till Bed-time. *Laura* wondering much from whence this should proceed, (tho' it requir'd no penetrating Eye to discry a deep impression of the Lovely Stranger stamp'd upon her Bosom) had used the most prevalent of her Arguments, to dissuade her from that melancholy Humour: But alas! 'twas all in vain; she retired to her Bed, where her Pillow was the only Confident to the Agitation she suffered that Night; which was spent

spent with much more satisfactory Reflections by *Melantius*, who encountred no other Ideas but those of Love and Extasie; he was transported with the many Charms he found in the beautiful *Aspatia*. He fancy'd her his own, not dreaming of any Obstacle that could oppose it; he consider'd the Equality of their Birth and Fortune, the Conveniency of the Match; and indulged himself with all the transporting and delightful Raptures that proceed from thought.

The next day was that great Solemnity, wherewith *Alphonso Henery* entertain'd his new Queen *Beatrice*, Daughter to *Alphonso the Tenth*, King of *Castile*; by whom that Noble Dowry, the Kingdom of *Algaroes*, was added to the Crown of *Portugal*. All the Nobility was there present to pay their Devoirs to the Queen. In particular, the illustrious Families of *Almeyda*, and that of the Marquess *de Leganes*, who was Father to our Cavalier *Melantius*. The Celebration of these Nuptials, would be too tedious to recite; let it suffice, never was any thing more glorious, where *Melantius* made the most considerable Figure of the *Beaux Esprits*, and *Aspatia* of the *Belles*.

The general approbation they receiv'd, did not a little contribute to augment the favourable Sentiments they had entertained for one another. And at the *Tournament*,

C

when

when *Aspatia* beheld her young Heroe enter the List, (with an Aspect that foretold the Miracles he perform'd) it was easie to read her Wishes in her Eyes, which were constantly fixed upon him, and seem'd to move in the same Sphere with the Vicissitudes of his Fortune. But oh ! how her Heart danc'd when he came of Conquerour ; the Air resounded with 10 Poems to the Victor, and ecchoing Triumphs filled the breath of Fame ; but his proudest Trophy was the Congratulation he receiv'd from the fair *Aspatia* ; and without doubt, he was Gallant enough to attribute his good Fortune to the influence of her Eyes.

After some short Preliminaries, these Diversions broke up, to entertain the Ladies with a splendid Ball ; and it was there *Melantius* determin'd to make an Offering of his panting Heart to the Deity he Worship'd : His kind Stars soon bless'd him with a lucky Opportunity ; for *Aspatia* being somewhat overheated with Dancing, was in motion with her Fan, which by chance she let fall. *Melantius* was the fortunate Person that took it up, and delivering it with a profound Bow, in a soft dying Tone ; he said, *Ah ! Madam, could you as easily restore my Heart, which I just now resign'd an Offering at your Feet.* She smil'd at the pretty Gallantry, and reply'd, *I never retain any thing*

The Lucky Discovery. 151

I cannot pretend a Property in; and would have declin'd a farther Discourse: But he continu'd, *That is as your Cruelty or Justice will determine: This I can affirm, it is no longer mine; and if your Severity will not think it worth your Charitable Protection, you shall behold it the most wretched Victim in the World.* He waited for no answer, but taking hold of one corner of her Handkerchief, which he dexterously convey'd into his own Hands: 'Tis but reasonable, Madam, (said he) to afford me some small Relick, to guard that Breach, which otherwise you expose to the greatest danger imaginable. Altho' this did something displease her, it was impossible to retrieve it, without a publick view; therefore not offering at a recovery, she suffered him to carry it off, tho' not without a great Resentment, which appear'd in her angry Brow. *Melantius*, who was sensible of his fault, engaged with the rest of the Company, and appeared no more that Night before *Aspatia*, but as a Criminal; only she had the secret satisfaction of often seeing the Handkerchief display'd to his Lips, and there most religiously saluted. The Departure of the King and Queen, put a period to that Days Entertainment; and all the Company retired well disposed to sleep; nor did a thought molest *Aspatia*, who enjoyed

16 **Love in Distress** : or,
a sweet Recruit for the last Night's Tribulation.

Phæbus had already mounted the Olympick Palace, and made a considerable Progress in his Day's Circuit, when our lovely Fair awaked, and called *Laura* to inquire how the Day had past : After she receiv'd satisfaction to some such frivolous Questions, *Laura* presents her with a *Billet-doux*, which she had just receiv'd from a Page of *Melantiüs*, who still waited for an Answer : She took it with a panick fear, in hope and doubt, to find what it contain'd ; but who can tell her private Transport, when she read what follows.

MELANTIUS to
ASPATIA.

IF an Offender may have leave to plead for Mercy, have pity on a true Penitent. My Crime may be too Enormous to expect a Pardon ; but I am sure my Contrition is of as large a size. You have already sufficiently punished me, and that cruel Frown at parting stab'd deep into my Heart ; nor could Poyson, Daggers, or a thousand Deaths
be

be half so terrible. Let it suffice, I only live to receive my Sentence from those dear Lips that can give Life even in the pronouncing of my Death. My Life and Happiness are absolutely in your power; and if to Love with the most sensible Tenderneſs imaginable, can offend; to Die, would be but the least part of my Duty: But if a Restoration of my petty Theft can anyway contribute to a Pardon, permit me this Afternoon to lay at your Feet both That and your Adoring Slave,

Melantius.

This passionate Declaration was so far from displeasing, that it filled her with a Torrent of Joy, to find a Man so entirely at her Dispose, whom Fate had already destin'd her to Love; to deny his Visit, was to rack her own Inclination, and to permit it too easily, would make the Conquest too cheap; however, this Contest did not long last, the irresistible God bore sway, and she returned this Answer.

ASPATIA to MELANTIVS.

I Am Confirmed, that in all points Melantivus is the most Gallant of Men; and where he offends, he makes but too sufficient Reparation: I can forgive without these Insinuations you use to bribe a Pardon; but shall expect with the Return of my Handkerchief, you desist a Suit too inglorious for a Heroe.

Aspatia.

Having dispatched the Page, she began to reflect how barbarously she used Octavio in the mean time; but who can resist the powerful influence of that little Tyrant, who models us after his own Chimera's? well may he be represented blind, not only for the inequality of Persons that he wounds, but whoever is possessed of the same Malady, runs violently on, pursues the Object of their Affections, adheres to nothing but Almighty Love, and cannot see an Error.

Well, she is resolv'd to let Octavio stay a little for an Answer, being in some perplexity
what

what to write to him ; she banished all troublesome Thoughts, and wholly dedicated that Day to *Melantius*, who came dress'd with all the Gaiety of a young Bridegroom ; enter'd the Room, with ten thousand Graces, and passionately flings himself at her Feet ; and having stole her Hand, he gently rais'd it to his trembling Lips, and stamp't the Image of his Soul upon it. *Aspatia*, who sympathized too feelingly with this Extasie, was the first that by good fortune recovered her self ; and being oblig'd to take some notice, *My Lord*, (said she) *this is far from concurring with the Capitulations I propos'd. Oh ! name them not ;* (said he) *forbid the Sun to shine, stop the bright Charioteer of Heaven in his full Career, root up the Earth from its Center, but never, never bid me cease to Love ; all these are more possible to be done, then not to Love the Adorable Aspatia.*

She already felt a Commiseration too sensible to withstand, but her unlucky Sex obliges her to act that hard Part, to appease the dearest of her Wishes : she wore the Mask, and most severely reprimanded him, conjur'd him not to pursue so extravagant a Rallery ; or if it were sincere, to avoid so fruitless an Amour : In short, she played the Tyrant, and insulted over a Heart, whose utmost Faculty was to serve her ; but *Melantius* could not yield to Despair, at every little repulse,

repulse, and resolved not to quit the Siege : He left her not that Evening, till he had brought her to a more gentle Humour ; after that, not a Day passed wherein he failed to sigh and plead. This tender Application engaged her to shew him indifferent Favours, till at last Time and Assiduity prevailed, and sighing, dying, she confessed she Loved. It was then his Joy was without bounds, exalted above a common Transport, he was impatient for a Consummation, and every Minute of delay was insupportable ; he informed the Marquess *de Leganes*, that now he was ready to make a Resignation of himself to the fair *Aspatia*, and only waited his Proposals to the Duke her Father. The Marquess was extreamly well pleased at his Son's resolution to Marry, commended his Choice, applauded his Prudence, and without farther demurs, he orders his Coach to be ready, and away to the Duke *de Almydas*, whom he had the fortune to find at home : Before they parted, occasion presented to promote the Unity of their Families : The Duke returned the Marquess all the Civility in the World ; and tho' he did not absolutely determine, he desired time to consider, which was more out of Ceremony, than any doubt or scruple ; he knew the conveniency of the Alliance, and after pretensions of mature Consideration, two or three Visits brought it to a conclusion. Next

Next there was a most glorious Preparation for their Nuptials; in the mean time *Melantius* had free egress and regress to the Author of his Bliss, where the blessed Hours were spent in gazing, wishing, and a thousand Toys that Lovers affect to please themselves, till the happier Minutes may be improved.

Who would not conclude him now the happiest of all Men, just ready to launch into a Sea of Pleasure, within reach of the wish'd for Haven, and not able to touch the Shore. Fate so order'd it that the Marchioness *de Leganes* was taken violently ill, and in three or four days died: This put a stop to a farther proceeding, in the Hymenean Ceremonies, till a long Obsequies was celebrated to the Dead.

'Tis impossible to tell how much *Melantius* suffered at this time, not only for the loss of so dear a Parent, but at the delay of so many Joys; which without doubt would have been a kind Ingredient, and have helpt down the bitter Pill of Affliction, with less regret; there's no Life, no support for him, whilst absent from *Aspatia*: But the Circumstance of his Affairs forbidding his stay, the better to bear this parting, he begs her Picture, which she grants, but at the same time intreats for his:—This was his constant Companion in all Adventures, never from his Bosom,

Bosom, slept and conversed with him, mitigated his Misfortunes and increased his Joys; and so strong was his Imagination, that he fancied it bore part in all his Change of Fortune.

The time was now come, that the Marchioness was convey'd to *Porto*, there to be Inter'd, in a Tomb belonging to their Ancestors. Whilst these Rites were performing, *Melantius*, to give vent to the excess of Sorrow that oppress'd him, walkt out one Evening on the Banks of *Ducro*, whose pleasant Streams runs by the Walls of *Porto*; and moving on with a soft easie pace, silently entertaining himself with Contemplation of his future Fate, was rous'd from the Abyss of Thought he was lost in, by a Sigh that seem'd to pierce the Air; this made him curious to discover what Person it was that gave such evident tokens of Distress: He had not gone far before he discovered a Cavalier, who lay upon the Grass, with his Face towards the River; he appeared to be very tall, and his Hair black; he had a Letter in his Hand, which having read, he flung his Arm down with a little force, and cryed, *Where must we seek for Vertue? Is there such a thing in being? Or, is it but a Notion? 'Tis evident it's not to be found within this Globe of Earth, if it can fail in Cruel Fair Aspatia.* These words were very much surprizing

prizing to *Melantius*, who heard one sighing, and as he hoped for another *Aspatia*, he was a true Lover, and did not want for a thousand perplexing Fears and Doubts, at the Name of his Mistress, yet were they not so violent as to disturb his attention to the Cavalier who thus went on: *All things in Nature look so hush and calm, and not a breath of wind disturbs the gentle Air, throughout the Ho-izon is all serene, nor do these dewy Sheets one wrinkle wear; and yet the Perturbations of my Breast, are able to affect the World around me: Have I not sent, implored, and wisht in vain? And am I now grown so Contemprible not to deserve an Answer? Oh! Where are all those pitying Looks and Glances, that used to wound Octavio with delight? Was my Hopes exalted to that height, to make my Fall more desperate, and upbraid me with too great Presumption? These Characters! These dear Characters! can Witness I was not once indifferent to her. Support me, feeble Limbs, once more to Lisbon, and I'll discharge you ever from a future Service.*

The naming of *Lisbon*, gave a fresh Alarm to *Melantius*, and had like to have delivered him up to as much Desperation as the other: He was fixing direful Thoughts, when he perceived the Cavalier to rise and come forward, which obliged him to retire some distance, till he saw the way he would take,

take, being resolved to track him, and if possible, to find out the Mystery of his Trouble; with that design he suffered him to advance to the utmost limit of his sight; who returned the same way that *Melantius* came, with his Arms folded, and his Eyes fixed upon the Earth. In this posture he had not gone far, before he discerned something on the ground which cast a resplendant light, that shew'd it to be of considerable value; and having taken it up, it appeared an Ebony-Case inlayed with Gold, and set round with Diamonds; the outside Glories were inferiour to what he found within, and it requires a more Polite Pen to display the Wonder, Extasie and Jealousie, that possessed his mind, to find the lively Protraicture of *Aspatia* painted there. Great Gods! (said he) *Where will my various Fortune end? Am I beholden to ye for this Present, or is it lost by my more happy-Rival? Perhaps Aspatia may be near this place, and by some lucky Accident have dropt it: But Oh! that hope is vanish'd 're it is conceiv'd; Octavio dare not think she who could suffer him to Languish these two Months, without the least of a relenting Pity, could be induced to set a foot near Porto, whilst it contained her much contemned Admirer: Yet, whatever Chance has sent thee, thou art welcome. Aspatia may be Cruel to the highest degree, but you are innocent, and*

no Ingrate ; you smile, and please me with a thousand Graces ; and should I lay you near my panting Heart, you would no way resist, but yield, and there receive warmth from my raging fire : Nay, should I ravish here ten thousand Kisses, they were all my own, without the least repulse : Why then, dear Flatterer, we will never part, but cheat my childish Hope with these Delusions.

He was seated under a Tree, pleasing himself with abundance of such wild Discourses. When *Melantius* missed his Picture, he returned with all the Concern in the World, to the place where he discovered the Cavalier ; and having search'd diligently, and not finding it, his fears suggests to him a thousand Doubts : Sometimes he fancies that he had dropt it as he came, and probably 'tis found by some poor Peasant ; who, tempted with the Treasure, would conceal it, from all possible means of regaining : Then he imagines it in the hands of the Cavalier, whom by this time he had lost sight of, and knows not where to find : This made him redouble his Pace, and with all the speed he could, endeavour to recover the Town before he was Hous'd ; yet not so expeditiously as to hinder him from a slight search as he passed. Being thus imploy'd, and his thoughts wholly fixed on his Loss, he was startled at the unexpected sight of the Cavalier, who still lay under the Tree, adoring the lovely

Picture of *Aspatia*. *Melantius* filled with Joy to have found it, yet Jealousie and Spleen to see it there, went up to him ; and with a hasty Voice demanded the Piece. But the Cavalier drown'd in his thoughts, answers to some former Ejaculations of his own ; *The Gods shall never retrieve thee.* This rude reply, (as *Melantius* apprehended it to be) so enraged him, that without any more words he had recourse to his Sword ; bidding the Cavalier (if he dar'd) rise, and defend it ; who being recovered from his waking Dream by this fierce Attack, tho' not knowing the reason, yet seeing there was no time for Parley, he Drew in his own Defence ; at first only parrying to avoid the Passes that were made at him, but finding his Enemy too resolute to be play'd with, he was forc'd to endeavour his Dispatch, to secure his own Life.

This rencounter was maintained with equal Fortune for some time, by these Combatants, till *Melantius* feeling himself bleed in the right Arm, renew'd his force ; Shame and Anger made him desperate ; so that by a thrust under the left Pap, he had the advantage to see the Cavalier fall ; but *Melantius* (who was in all points truly Noble and Generous, ran to his Assistance, deplor'd his Fate, begg'd his Pardon, and blam'd him for being so refractory. The Cavalier had
neither

The Lucky Discoverie. 27

neither Sence, nor Strength to listen to his many relenting, tho' ineffectual Expressions, yet perceiving him willing to serve him, with broken Sentences and Signs, he desired to be carry'd to a little Cott within a stones throw, which stood alone and obscure at the foot of a Hill. *Melantius* having discry'd the place, was in distress how to convey him thither; when he beheld an old Man driving up the Hill a few poor Goats; he called to him, and desired his help, he was very ready to assist, and withal told him, what his humble Roof could afford, was at their Command; but he feared it had nothing to recommend it but Retirement, being three Miles off the City, poorly furnish'd, and ill provided. *Melantius* thank't him for his seasonable Relief, and return'd to the place where he had left the Cavalier just expiring. When the old Man drew near to discern the Face of this Unfortunate, he burst into a shower of Tears; and cryed, *Ah! poor Don Pedro; What Cruel Hand has destroyed the best of Men? Now may these Shades be cursed, whose dear delight'ul Retreat has betrayed thee, like a Syren, to thy utter ruine: Did I this Morning leave thee fresh and well, to bring thee home a dead and helpless Corpse? Oh! had I never known thy Vertues, I had never missed thee.*

His grief spoke a sensible sorrow, but considering a speedy help was required, *Melantius* interrupted him to bear the Cavalier to the House, where they layed him on a Bed, and covered up his Wound close from the Air ; *Melantius* likewise bound up his own Arm, and the old Man called a Lad, whom they sent to the Town to bring a Chirurgeon with all speed and privacy ; in the mean time careful not to disturb the wounded Cavalier, who had little other sign of Life than a troubled breathing ; they retire to the Door of the Hutt, where *Melantius* enquired of the old Man what he knew concerning him, he was nothing scrupulous to declare his acquaintance of him, and thus began.

Sir, (said he) *I have lived upon this spot these fourscore years, never in plenty, nor never did I want ; by Trade a Fisherman, my Family once large, which I maintained by my daily Labour, till the Supream Powers were pleased to reduce it to the poor Lad you have seen, who is my Grand-child ; he is now about fifteen years of Age, him have I brought up to the same Slavery, being in no Capacity to do better for him ; we live alone, and eat what we earn with sweet content. One Evening, as we were fishing, two Leagues from this place, was the first time we saw this Don Pedro, sitting at the foot of a Rock melancholy, and sighing to the Winds, but he took no notice of us that time,*

nor

nor several times after, when we have found him in the same place, sometimes reading, sometimes complaining at his hard Fate; one Day he seemed diverted with our Sport, and desired to Board us; we put to Shore and took him in, and he continued with us till towards Night, enquiring of my Life, my Family, my Abode, in all which he was particularly pleased at my unambitious Mind, and free Content; he told me I was Rich and Happy because I coveted no more. For that Night we parted, and having liberally rewarded us, he returned from whence he came, but bid us not fail to meet him the next Day, having promised to visit our homely Habitation: We fetched him punctually at the appointed place, and brought him to this Rustick Shore, where he was so taken with the Retirement, and innocent Life, being a Nursery to his Grief, that he could not part from us; but this mean Room (he now lies in) was his Lodging, being the best we have. Six Weeks has he been here, in which time his Diversion was to Walk alone, early and late, sometimes he would Fish with us, he said as we did; all I could learn relating to himself, or Country, is, that his Name is Pedro, a Spaniard Born; he was very inquisitive after Letters, and sent the Boy every Night to Porto to enquire.

By this time the Chyrurgeon was come, whom Melantius brib'd to Secrecy; having

prob'd the Wound of the Cavalier, they were greatly encouraged to find it not mortal ; but his excessive bleeding had already reduced him so low, he could not speak, but fainted several times in their Arms. *Melantius* (tho' he did not want for Jealousie that this was his Rival) yet considered his Misfortune with much trouble, he stayed till he was Dressed, and after applying something to his own Arm, and leaving a Charge to the old Man to be careful of him, he returned with the Chyrurgeon to *Porto*, promising to be with them early the next Morning. After a short Devoir pay'd to the Marquess de *Legánez*, he retired to his Bed, to Contemplate on the Days Adventure, and altho' his Malady requir'd rest, his distracted thoughts could not permit of any respite, but flew more swift than the fleeting Minutes ; he was impatient for the Day, that he might again visit the wounded Cavalier, who (he hoped) would be in a Condition to relate some part of his Life, at least tell him, why he would not part with the Picture but by Compulsion.

Scarce had the pale-fac'd Empress of the Night, drawn her Sable Curtains, but *Melantius* was up, and arrived at the poor Mansion ; just as bright *Sol* had tip'd the top of *Olympius* with his golden Beams, having before taken care all Necessaries should be

he brought ; the Cavalier, whom he found something revived by a little Sleep he had gotten, and both able to look up and speak. *Melantius* enquired of his Health, withal signifying some Joy for this small Amendment, but an undissembled Concern for his Misfortune. The Cavalier was amazed at this great Civility, from a Person he imagined had used him the most unreasonable of all Men. Sir, (said he, in a weak faint voice) *how much I receive from you now, can only be repayed by a bare acknowledgment, and I must attribute this Favour altogether to your Generosity, being as much at a loss for any Merit of mine to deserve it, as I am at our late Quarrel.* *Melantius* as much puzzel'd at these Expressions, was apt to believe a Fever had seized his Head, but considering 'em spoke with an Air that shewed a great Moderation, and peculiar Grace, he was obliged to answer in this manner. *Nothing could have provoked my Sword against a Person of your Worth, but the refusing to restore this Picture, which is my only present Felicity.* The Cavalier assured him he did not hear it demanded. But, Sir, (said he) *dare you so far trust my Fidelity, to inform me whose it is, and how it became yours?* *Melantius* very willingly reply'd; *It is a Lady's, whose Fame is not confined to the scanty limits of one Kingdom, but universally admired: She is the Daughter to the*

the Duke de Almeyda; and were it not for the Filting Tricks of Fortune, I should now stile her my Wife; her own Hand recommended it to me, when the Death of the Marchioness de Legares (from whom I received my being) put a stop to our Marriage, which should have been Consummated within a Week.

The Cavalier, whose Attention was interrupted with a Torrent of Sighs, at this last Accent of *Melantius*, resigned his Life, or at least it appeared so, when all the industry that was used could not recal his Spirits; but just when they discovered some glimmering Hopes, his Soul shrank back as in the Abhorrance of the World; but the assistance of the Chirurgeon, who was now come, was so effectual, that no longer could the impulse of his anxious Trouble repel his Art, but in spite of himself, was his Life thrust back, to die ten thousand Deaths: With the first breath he recover'd, he exclaim'd against the Cruel Fair, and blames Heaven for making her the brightest of her Sex, without dispersing their Divinest Attributes upon her. Oh! Why! (said he) Why was she created so Divinely Glorious? (That Gods themselves would have been proud to have layn at her Feet, adoring Captives) and not be blessed with unblemish'd and unshaken Virtue? Is there no Bolt of Heaven that strikes with Fate, but must it light on miserable Octavio? Ah!

false

The Lucky Discovery.

33

false Ingrate, now triumph in thy Injures, and with thy insulting scorn crush thy loathed Victim lower than the Grave.

Every word he spoke, was like Darts to *Melantius*, and almost pierced him through; nor was his staggering Thoughts longer in dispute, if this was his Rival: Alas! he was too terribly convinc'd; yet being nearly concern'd to have a more ample satisfaction, which he could not learn from this confused Discourse; he had so much command of himself, as to endeavour to moderate the excess of his Passion, and recal his Peace: But few things are of sufficient power to persuade a despairing Man into Reason; he looks upon himself as the lowest and vilest Insect; miserable, despis'd, and ruin'd; nay, lost in a Mist of wild Horrors. In this rage he continues to curse the malice of his Stars, sometimes pouring out Execrations on himself, for being too unworthy to possess so Divine Treasures. Then again charging her with being False, Cruel, Inhumane and Unjust. Now (said he) if this Soul dare remain in this desolate Body, who can be more wretched? But I will never fall so low, and abject: Nor can I bear, (even tho' her Charms are by her falsehood almost lost;) that another should ravish them from me. But will the Gods permit such things to prosper? On whom we Mortals do rely for Justice. No endeavour they

they could use, could bring him into a calmer Humour, or engage him to suffer his Wound to be dress'd; he still oppos'd it, and tore the Plaisters off as they were apply'd. *Melantius* alledg'd, That probably there might be a mistake. *Are you sure* (said he) *this is the same Aspatia?* If you knew this *Hand*, (he reply'd) which I believe you are no Stranger to, your Doubts are evidently resolved. With that he deliver'd him a Letter, in which there was such tender Expressions, that could proceed from nothing but Love: As he read, every Letter grated his Soul, to find such considerable Favours lavish'd on another. *Oh! Poor Melantius;* (said he, sighing to himself) *thou hast but blown up the Embers, in the absence of this Cavalier;* for 'tis impossible such substantial Love, could vanish with a flash; even when he was within reach of enjoying all that his Soul could wish for. But why should I complain? Is it not for me, she forgoes all these Engagements? If it is a Frailty, 'tis to make me happy? But how am I sure she doth not yet retain some Inclination, for the once lov'd Octavio? Who by one melting glance, may perhaps kindle afresh her expiring Flame. How may I believe that a Heart which could once play false, should constant prove to me? What Charms has poor *Melantius* to secure it? Only Excess of Love. Notwithstanding these unequal Thoughts, he resolves

to see her suddenly ; and if her Plea convinc'd him of her Innocence, she should from him receive an everlasting faithful Love. Yet this ungenerous Proceeding with *Octavio*, shock'd his tenderest Sentiments ; and were he not already the most amorous of Men, he had declined a Beauty that could be guilty of such pitiful Conduct : He was thoroughly convinc'd how much the Cavalier might have hoped for ; yet considering himself the happy Man, he reflects on it with Partiality. After much intreaty they prevailed with him to be dressed, and finding him inclinable to repose, (which was but a feigned show, that he might have the melancholy liberty of his own Thoughts) they left him.

Melantius returning to *Porto*, in his way met the Boy with a Letter directed to *Don Pedro*, and knowing the Hand to be *Aspatia's*, who could blame his Curiosity, in this juncture of Affairs for opening it ? She had been in a Sea of Troubles and Fears in his Absence, considering what would be the event of *Octavio's* Passion, should she not answer his Letter : She knew he could not long be a Stranger to her Amours with *Melantius*, and therefore she thought cunningly to palliate the Story to him her self ; with this design she had framed, (with all the Subtilty and Craft that could be invented) a way to break to him the dreadful Secret ; and in order to that, had thus writ. -ASPA-

ASPATIA to OCTAVIO.

THink me not Ungrateful, when I send the
 Generous Octavio, the best of Wishes.
*Oh! how unaccountable are the Circumstances
 of our Lives and Passions? Let it suffice, 'tis
 you, and on'y you, can make my future Days
 happy, or miserable: I have Wonders to tell
 you, and beg that speedily you come to Lisbon.
 Laura shall meet you, at the usual Rendezvous,
 and conduct you to the lost and confused*
 Aspatia.

This indeed new model'd his Resolutions;
 and instead of seeing her, his design is now
 wholly to abandon her, having discovered
 (as he thinks) a sufficient Demonstration of
 her Falseness; Rage and Resentment, fill'd
 his Soul: *Am I at last (said he) abused and
 forlorn? No, false One, you may triumph,
 but never shall insult over the wronged Melan-
 tius; for from this Minute, I will shun thy
 false deluding Chams.*

Thus fully determined, he goes home; no
 rest could he take, various were his thoughts,
 and as various his Resolutions; yet all deter-
 mined in that point, of never seeing more the
 Fair Deceiver. How to dispose of himself he
 was not long at a stand, when he reflected
 that all Italy was in Arms, and that the Dis-
 spute

The Lucky Discovery.

37

spute betwixt the *Pittis*, and that Compleat Heroe and Champion for his Country, *Lorenzo de Medici*, the *Tuscan-War* that was then afoot, the Republick of *Venice* that was likewise engaged, would give him a glorious Diversion, from his perplexing Crosses, especially too since the *Turks* gave them new Fears, by menacing the remainder of those Islands, which they held in the *Archipelago*.

Thus positively resolv'd, he writes a Letter to the *Marquis de Leganes*; in which he desired him not to be concern'd, at his sudden Departure; since he had made a Vow to perform some Religious Duties, not only relating to himself, but for the good of his dead Mother's Soul; withal telling him the reason why he did not take his leave, as his Duty requir'd, was fear of being oppos'd in that which nothing ought to avert; and in his absence, which he hoped would not be long, his Prayers should constantly be offered up for his Prosperity: Likewise, that he should go nigh to steer his first Course to our Lady of *Loretto*. This being prepared, he call'd a Servant whom he could trust, and having related to him his design, ordered him with speed and privacy to hire a *Feleuqua* at the nighest Port. Whilst his Man (whose Name was *Manta*) was thus employ'd: *Melantius* writes to

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Aspatia

Aspatia this Letter, and in it incloses hers, which he had intercepted going to *Octavio*.

MELANTIUS to ASPATIA.

YOU must pardon me (*Madam*) if I dare not encounter those dangerous Eyes once more, to take my last Farewel ; believe me, 'tis with great Regret I quit this Kingdom, and had *Aspatia* been true, not Empires heaped on Empires, could have tempted me to leave her. At the same time I must applaud your Generosity to the unhappy happy *Octavio*, who by a dire Mistake of Fortune, has suffered under my Hand, yet not so cruelly as by your Eyes : 'Tis time to abate the Tyranny you have used, and restore a Heart he once has been possess'd of. If I have wrong'd him in intercepting this Billet, y^{ur} Mercy which I am sure will not be wanting, can calm the raging Fearor in his Blood. Yet to make a Reparation for my Fault, but more to gratifie your dearest Wish, by my Absence you shall fear no Obstacle to molest your Tranquility ; and where-ever I am, spight of myself, I am the lost confused *Aspatia's*

Melantius.

Soon after *Montal* returned with the News of a Merchant-Vessel that only waited the next fair Wind to hoist Sail for the Streights,

The Lucky Discovery. 39

Streights, which they hourly expected. *Melantius* got all things in readiness, having contrived just as he Embark'd, to send his two Letters forward. About the hour of Twelve, a Mariner came to give *Montal* warning, that the more speed they made the better. The Night shrouded with her gloomy Vail, and a fresh Breeze of Wind represented to *Melantius* (as he made to the Port) not the calmest Reflections; yet with a Noble Bravery that always attended him, he Embark'd; where we will leave him on his Voyage, and relate what was done in the mean time at Home.

Early the next Morning the Marquess *de Leganes* had his Letter, which extremely startled him, but being a Pious Man, and considering the consequence of the Business, he the easier dispenc'd with his Absence; and what made him the more credulous, was his Engagement with *Aspatia*, which he judg'd to be too dear a Tye, to quit upon a Whimsy: Thus with moderation did the Marquess bear the Absence of his Son, but for what poor unfortunate *Aspatia* suffered, (who knew too well the cruel cause) I dare not undertake here to display. Only the weight of her Misfortunes was of power to sink a World. A Death-like Cold seiz'd her Heart, her every Faculty lost their use, at the News of his Flight. In this manner

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she

she continued for a long time, till her swelling Passion forc'd a vent; then how often did she blame her unhappy Conduct, raging and almost frantick, she deliver'd herself up to the extremity of an immoderate Sorrow: No Name was too hideous for such black Ingratitude, as she term'd it, nor no Wish too hard or levere; at the same time forgetting her unkind usage to *Octavio*. There was not one Argument *Laura* omitted to restore her Peace, but to no purpose, her Reason was lost; she beheld her self fallen from the height of Bliss to the most abject Misfortune, and in her wild thoughts she saw the Man she loved, and hourly languished for, in another Country, pleasant, and diverting himself in Company with all the Ladies of Beauty, Wit, and Fortune, whilst she was slighted and abandoned by him, deserted, and foraken: How this rack'd the utmost faculty of her Soul? *Oh! Melantius; Oh! Cruel Melantius*, did she cry, *How miserable? How wretched miserable have you made me? If I have been unjust, Heaven knows it is not to thee; then blame thy self, thy dear engaging Self, that has betray'd Alpatia to those base Characters of False, Unjust, and Ungenerous.*

This Passion continued so violent, that she found it impossible to appear before the Duke that Day, without exposing her Sentiments,

ments, having lost her Master-piece of Dissimulation and Cunning, which by some is attributed as incident to the Sex, too sensible was her Affliction to bear disguise, and therefore to conceal it from the Duke, whom she knew would search too nicely into the dreadful Cause, she sent *Laura* to acquaint him she was indisposed, immediately retiring to her Bed, in expectation of a Visit, knowing him to be the most indulgent of Fathers: Not long after he came reading of a Letter he had just receiv'd, and having enquired and advised about her Health, *This Letter comes (said he), from the Marquess de Leganes, wherein he acquaints me of a short Voyage his Son has taken to the Chappel of Loretto; but, I believe (continued he with a Smile) your Intelligence has been more speedy.* At this second Confirmation and killing ungrateful News, she could hardly support her self, and as he prest on to know if she had been before informed, she felt the greatest difficulty and pain to force but those words, *I was.*

The Duke having some guess at the nature of her Malady, left her to gain some Repose, or rather to the freedom of her own Thoughts. No sooner had he quitted the Room but she called *Laura* to her, and with an easie Look, as if she had master'd some difficulty, spoke to her in this manner:

Since I have confided in thee as to all the Circumstances of my Life, so must you now assist me in this last and most Desperate : I Love, and you are no Stranger to the Extremity of my Passion, my Life, my Honour, my Fame, are but false Idols to that Potent God : Tell me then, Can I live and not possess Melantius ? That dear Melantius, whose Soul once mov'd with the same tender melting touch as mine. Oh ! 'tis impossible ; he thinks me False, Perfidious, or he had never left me : Shall I then live with this black Infamy, and not right my self ? No, I will seek him to the utmost Verge of Earth, and there proclaim my Innocency ; then if his Heart should prove impervious, and obdurate, my Death shall convince him of the direful Truth ; and my wrong'd Ghost shall be ever before his Eyes, revenging for Justice and Revenge, perplex his future Peace.

Laura gave her self no trouble to dissuade her from this Exploit, believ'ing it no other than a Chimera she would never put in execution ; But she found her self mistaken, it was what had taken deep root and fixt in her Resolution, she persisted in it daily, and then she failed not to lay before her the danger and hazard, but chiefly the false Constructions would be made of such an extravagant Action. Aspasia was deaf to all Advice, and only made answer, She would

not be diverted from her Design, tho' she was forced to adventure alone. When *Laura* found her so fully determined, she assured her, nothing could have that face of difficulty, or terrou, to make her decline her in the most desperate Attempt; but hoping her care in reminding her of what might prove to her Disadvantage, should not offend, she positively contents to obey her Commands,

Thus satisfy'd with *Laura's* Compliance, the next Consultation was to get Mens Cloaths, the easier to disguise their Flight, and most commodious for their adventurous Travels. This Task was left to *Laura*, as likewise to hire a Vessel to Transport 'em to any Port in *Italy*, who performed very punctually all her Commands, and pretending a Visit to some Relations for two or three Days, by *Aspatia's* Connivance, she went directly to *Serual*, a famous Haven about 20 Miles from *Lisbon*, where she secured a small Feleupaa for their purpose, and also placed Horses in the Road for their more speedy conveyance thither. The Wind fair every Hour she was there, which obliged her to make a quick return to *Lisbon*, to inform *Aspatia*, and assist her Flight.

Night being the time for performing of such Projects, they waited with great impatience, and panick fears till it came, in the mean

mean time providing good store of Gold and Jewels, the most portable and necessary Luggage, and being thus Knight-Errantly Equip'd, they sally'd out, and at two Miles Stage took Horse, and rid full speed to *Se-rural*; they arrived there about four a Clock, was Embark'd with the Courage of Heroins, and a fair way under Sail e're they were missed at home. But yet too soon was the fatal News spread throughout all *Portu-gal*, for the Duke not seeing nor hearing from his Daughter the next Day, concluding her not well, went (as was his usual Custom) to her Apartment to visit her, but not finding her there, he was much surprized, and seeing a Note lie on the Table he took it up, which to his greater Wonder, he found subscribed to himself; wherein she acquainted him she had left the Kingdom, but had no way left to excuse her flight, but that Almighty Love was the powerful Cause, whose Passions and Effects were ever unaccountable, and begg'd him, if he could, retain a thought of his own former Joye, he would be so Charitable to recollect them in her defence, and believe she left so good a Father, with the greatest violence imaginable; concluding with her Petition to indulge himself, and bear her Absence with moderation, and a charitable Opinion of her, giving him some hopes of a

spee-

speedy return, which should compensate for all her imprudence: But alas! This was of little force or efficacy; for the immoderate Grief, Anguish, and Shame which possess'd the Duke, (not only for the loss of a Child he had built his chief felicity on, but at the Dishonour of his Family, which could never be retriev'd) was not with ease to be allay'd: He consider'd her the Bloom of all *Portugal*, celebrated for her Beauty, and universally admired; but when he came to reflect what a Blot she had given all these Advantages, he could hardly support the Trouble. There was no Port throughout the Kingdom he failed to send to, with Orders to search all Transport-Ships; all diligence imaginable was used, but to no purpose; our *Amazons* were fled beyond recall, their Habits taking off all Suspicion.

Being thus destitute of Comfort, he found himself not Philosopher sufficient, to bear with tranquility, so great a Misfortune, especially in a place where he had all Eyes upon him, he therefore retired to a curious, tho' solitary Seat he had some twelve Miles from the Port of *Ville-neue*, where he pass'd his Days recluse from the World, with great Devotion and Acts of Charity, only now and then a select Friend, in particular the Marquess *de Leganes*, who was herein greatly interested, a fit Companion to lament with him

him the unfortunate Conduct of both their Children: But what the more confounded the Marquess was, he lately had an account his Son was long since arrived at *Leghorn*, and after visiting some of those Holy Places he had promised, he had put himself in the *Gens d'Arms* of the *Florentines*, under *Lorenzo de Medici*; where he did those Wonders, I shall have no occasion to speak of here.

But to return to *Aspatia*, whose Voyage for the best part was pleasant and prosperous, they apprehended themselves past all danger, being within ten Leagues or less of *Leghorn*, when a boisterous Storm arose, and so violent a Tempest, that it terrify'd the most daring Mariner; the Seas ran Mountains high, and the Heavens clattered out Peals of Thunder; and notwithstanding they were so nigh the Shore, they were again drove out to Sea; and finding the Storm grow louder and more dreadful, they cut their Main-Mast by the Board, and strove to lay their Vessel at Hull, whilst all Hands were at work to furl their Sails, she sprang two Leaks, and it was with much ado; by the incredible labour and industry of the Seamen, who were continually plying the Pump, she was kept above Water.

This

This was a sad discouragement to our *Amazones*, (whom, tho' I cannot affirm, wish'd them selves on their own Native Soil) yet none can blame them for being dismay'd, when even the Tritons and Dolphins were amazed. This Tempest lasted full six Hours, all which time it seemed to threaten them with immediate Destruction, at length it began to clear up to Windward, the Wind abated, and in little time they made Land, tho' distant from the design'd Shore. They wrought lustily for their Deliverance, and recover'd a rocky and dangerous Haven, belonging to the State of *Naples*, call'd, *Puzzuolo*. The *Feleuqua* had done its last Duty, in bringing them safe to Land, her Rudder being spent, and she so much disabled, she was incapable of further Service, and lay a dismal Memorandum of their past Danger with her Keel upward upon the Sands.

With Joy they Landed, tho' feeble and faint, with little Nourishment, and hard Work, they in the Storm being forc'd to fling over Board most of their Provisions to lighten the Vessel. This was a place which obliged every one to shift for themselves; being none acquainted with the Country. There were few other Passengers than *Aspatia*, who now went by the Name of *Don Lelio*, and *Laura* by that of *Carlo*.

Wildness, Wants, Barrenness, and innumerable Calamities were seated here, which dreadful appearance encouraged the Weather-beaten and distressed Saylor, with Resolution to scale those desperate and stupendious Mountains, in pursuit of Food and Life ; but this Atchievement had too many Difficulties and Terrors to be attempted by *Don Lelio*, who was driven to that extremity, to beg when they had allay'd their own Hunger, some one would be so Charitable to return with Relief, and assist them up that desperate Precipice, yet before they departed, to prevent any Outrage which might be offer'd, he distributed Gold largely amongst them, and assured them he had but a small parcel left for the supplying his own Necessities, the Quantity, and Freeness where-with it was given, easily confirm'd them in this belief, and there was not one but promised an Expeditionous Return with the first Provisions they found. Thus did this Extravagant Passion reduce the Tender, Beautiful, and much to be pitty'd *Don Lelio* to all the Distress of Hunger and Cold ; nay, expos'd to a Multitude of other Dangers ; yet nothing made so cruel an Impression as the Absence of *Melantius*. Her Heart was not so obdurate, as to bear such sensible afflictions without Tears, which were shed in abundance by them both, to see themselves

left

left on a naked Rock, destitute of all comfort, and likely to become a Prey to some furious wild Beast : Thus loaden with fears and grief, they imparted their sad Thoughts one to the other, as they mov'd along the Shoar, and engaged in this lamentable Conversation, weeping their Fate, without design, or consideration, they had straggled about a Mile from the place where they first Landed, there they found an easie ascent up the Mountains, 'twas a Path that was levell'd as much as those impregnable Rocks would permit, and appeared to be frequented ; they were in great dispute, Whether they should make any Sally alone, not only for fear of the Dangers they might encounter ; but for fear of missing those who had promised to bring them succour, at last they resolved to take a view of the Countries on the other side, and then to return to their appointed place, they fortified one another with Counsel, Courage and Comfort, and attained to the utmost height of the Clift, before they could think of descending, and to their great satisfaction, they found on that side an easie descent ; they were likewise delighted with the pleasant Prospect of a lovely Champion Country stock'd with curious Rivers, and fine Woods ; this Prospect for some time took up their Consideration, and they had not yet determined what

to do, when they heard the agreeable sound of soft Musick in a Wood, at the Foot of that Rock ; they were now in hopes they were not far from Inhabitants, and believed it the best prudence to seek for shelter there, rather than trust to poor famished Wretches, who perhaps were as far from Comfort as ever ; they made no longer delay, but with speed descended, enter'd the pleasant Wood, and made up, as nigh as they could guess, to the harmonious sound that they heard on the Rock ; they had not gone far before they came under the Shade of a Noble Poplar, which spread his Branches over so large a Circumference, that it required admiration, as a curious piece of Nature ; but what was more surprising to them, was to read on this Tree carved in great Characters on the Bark, *Cruel Unkind Octavio*. This Name had dreadful effects on *Don Lelio*, which made *Carlo* take pains to draw him from that place, least it should have proved prejudicial to them both ; yet before he would consent to depart, he wrote underneath it with the point of his Sword, *Cruel Unkind Melantius*. By this time the Musick desisted, which put them to some trouble to find the way, but following a small Track they had discovered, e're they were aware, they were entertained with the same Instrument again ; and a Voice that was

The Tucky Discovery.

51

was sweet, and so nigh that it surprised them.

The Words that were Sung, were these :

I.

Must I Love, and must I Languish,
And ne'r hope to ease my Pain?
Can I bear the bitter Anguish
Of a slighted cold Disdain?
Is the Darts then of no power
For to wound this Dear Ingrate?
Must I suffer every Hour,
And be pity'd when too late?

I I.

Cruel God now change thy Fashion,
Since we must thy Will obey;
Give us both an equal Passion,
Or both Flames do thou allay:
Say Great Deity, Must never
My soft Wishes have redress?
Oh! How vain is all endeavour?
Love can only Love express.

They listned with great Attention, having at the same time the advantage of seeing the lovely Person, who deliver'd 'em in French, which both of them understood perfectly well; it being generally used by the Quality of most Nations: The Words were deliver'd with an Air all Passionate yet Serene; which Don Lelio had the satisfacti-

on of observing without being discover'd himself. The Youth appear'd about the Age of Sixteen, Beautiful as *Narcissus*, Fair as the God of Love, his Eyes of the nicest black, had a gloss that out-shined the Glories of the Day, and all his Features surprisingly perfect: He was dress'd after the *French Mode*, gallant in all things: His Hair which was curiously fair, was tied up in a Scarlet Ribbon: He was seated under a Myrtle Tree, and had a Lute under his Arm which afforded them this delightful Harmony. Appearing in this posture, he exceeded all the Fictions that Poets attribute to *Adonis*.

The Woods, the Groves, the pleasant murmuring noise of little Rivulets, and this amorous Song, gave *Don Lelio* a sweet Idea of *Elyzium*; and it was no small comfort to him, that his Fortune had cast him on a Shoar where there were Lovers; he could not believe them a barbarous People, that were capable of so refin'd a Sentiment. The Verses were so composed, they gave no intelligence, Whether a Man or Woman was complain'd of, and the Habit being all that appear'd Masculine in this Charming Youth, who had so much Goodness, Innocence and Sweetness in his Looks, that they apprehended no danger to encounter him: When the Song ended, they made up to the place
where

where he was, who appear'd in a great disorder at their approach, but they being willing to put an end to a Fright (that had spread an agreeable Blush throughout his Face) readily told their Distress, declaring they were Shipwrackt Persons, thrown by Fortune on that Coast, tho' distant from thence some Miles; the rest of their Company making their way over the dreadful Mountains, they only were left without hopes (unable to follow such desperate Attempts) till their wandering Steps had led them to that place, which had an Eye of Humanity in it. They humbly intreated him to inform them where they might hope for some Relief. *Don Ariosto* (so was this young Cavalier call'd) viewing the effeminate Delicacy of *Don Lelio* and his Comrade, had pretty well dissipated the Fears that had assaulted him, and being of a compassionate tender Disposition, was impatient to assist them; therefore with a quick return, he requires them to follow him, and to his utmost endeavour he would contribute to serve them, tho' he fear'd, the place could not produce any Accommodation worthy of such Persons; being acquainted with nothing but a poor Cabbin at the entrance of that Wood. They gladly accepted the Favour, and full of grateful Acknowledgments, redoubled their Paces to

54 **To be in Distress: or,**

this happy Retreat, which they found miserable poor to appearance, but 'twas no small Surprize to them when they entred, to see all things, tho' far from fine, curiously neat. The Inhabitants were, an Old Man, and an Old Woman, with one only Daughter, they received him with all the Joy in the World, and he appear'd to have no small Authority there: Having first refresh'd the Strangers, with wholesome Cordials, he led them into a Room, where there was a little Field Bed, and all things else necessary for a Cavalier, not to be expected in so mean a Mansion. He told them it had been his Abode a considerable time, finding more Content there, then in greater Splendour. He presented them Cloaths to shift themselves, retiring that they might have liberty, whilst he ordered a plentiful Supper; at which he had a Relation of all their Misfortunes at Sea. This Entertainment was comfortable and delightful, but broke up soon, that the weary Travellers might take Repose after their hard Sufferings. How terrible was the Complement expected here from *Don Lelio*? For it was but reasonable he should Invite *Don Ariosto* to partake a Lodging in his own Bed, whilst the others opposing it, seem'd a gentle Courtisie, taking up with *Clæ's* Chamber, who for a shift was forc'd to lye at the Feet of her Old Parents.

Our

Our Adventurers spent some part of the Night in discoursing of their Deliverance, as also of the Youth, Beauty, and particular way of living of the Lovely *Ariosto*: And notwithstanding some Sleep they had got, *Don Lelio* found himself the next Morning in a violent Feaver, unable to sustain so hard a Fatigue, which whilst his Body was in Agitation he was insensible of. This News was a great Affliction to *Don Ariosto*, who used all Endeavours to restore his Health, he watch'd by him Night and Day, and administred several things to him, having some knowledge in Physick, which Art he had for some time studied; but finding his Medicines and his Care ineffectual, he was infinitely concern'd.

Don Lelio continued desperately ill, even to the threatning of his Life; yet during all this Sicknes, not one had the least Suspicion of his Sex; till one Day *Carlo* and he, whose constant Entertainment it was to console their sad Destiny, had been seriously engaged in Discourse, when upon some occasion *Carlo* quitted the Room, without warning, and that so softly, he was not missed. Immediately enters *Don Ariosto*, and approached the Bed, but finding all silent, and the sick Cavalier's Head turn'd on the other side, concluding him asleep, was just retiring, but was stopt by his Voice,

who believing he was still speaking to his faithful *Carlo*, thus went on : *Ah! Laura, how imprudent will your poor Mistress be rendered, for leaving an indulgent Father, and all the Glories of this World, to bear this Hardship, and to pursue an unworthy false Ingrate, quit a Palace worthy of a King, to die here in a lonely Cott? But more, my dearest Laura, how terrible must Aspatia's Memory be to thee, when thou dost reflect, that by her wild Conduct thou wert lost, left on a Foreign Shoar destitute of Friends; whilst thy weak Sex not able to contend with the lean Jaws of Famine, Cold and miserably Poor, perhaps some broken Crums for a Regalio, a Bed of Straw to rest on, thy Sleep disturbed with Fears, thy Days with Horror, till by this lingering Wretchedness you perish. Canst thou forgive me then? Oh never! never!*

This pitiful Complaint, not only fill'd *Don Ariosto* with Wonder, but with the most sensible Compassion imaginable, when *Don Lelio* who had desisted a while from speaking, and hearing no reply, turn'd his languishing Eyes, which were drown'd in Tears to seek *Carlo*; but how full of confusion were those Eyes to see *Don Ariosto* at the Bed-side? Fixt and immoveable he lay, and seem'd lost in concern for what he had uttered: For sometime *Don Ariosto* took pleasure to gaze on her pretty Disorder,

whilst

whilst the other was tormented with a Multitude of Fears and Doubts; till Pity could no longer view such cruel Sufferings, he step'd up to her Bed, and with a Voice full of Amazement: *Madam*, (said he) for so I now may call you, since Chance has made me your accidental Confident; I here stand ready to confirm with the most sacred Vow, an everlasting Secrecy; for it would be more then barbarous in me, to insult where all Circumstances ought to oblige me to the tenderest Compassion; and therefore not to keep you longer in suspense, and to secure you from all Fears or Jealousies of me, know your Fortune has not play'd the most Filting Game in casting you on this despicable Shoar; for this Habit (pointing to himself) conceals the same Sex. How incredible soever this appear'd to Don Lelio at first, his sudden Recovery from his present Confusion, and the new Life it seem'd to inspire him with, shew'd how willing he was to believe it; whilst Don Ariosto thus continued: *By what I have heard, Love has had a powerful Influence over you, which doubly engages me to serve you, for I blush not to own, I now suffer under the Extremity of that Passion.* A great deal more he spoke to this purpose, giving convincing Proofs of what he said. Don Lelio conceived no Bounds to his Joy at this Confession; yet not being able to speak till a multitude of intruding Sighs

Sighs had made way, it was visibly seen how timerously he entertained this happy Discovery; at last with a faint Voice, between Hope and Distrust he thus broke silence: *With what Phrase may I term you? Pardon my Dispute, for I was ever disident of my own good Fortune, being almost inured to an unkind Destiny, but it would be no other than a Poor, and Ungenerous part in me, to Conceal any thing from a Person that so frankly has dispersed my Fears, by a kind and free Declaration. I have no scruple now to confess to you ingeniously, not only my Sex, but even all the Chances of my Life, when my Condition will permit, and you are at leisure to hear.*

As these words were delivering, Carlo entered the Room, in no small Surprize (as may be imagined) which was much more augmented to hear *Don Lelio*, call (in a free and unconcern'd manner) by the Name of *Laura*, taking *Don Ariosto* by the Hand, and thus speaking: *My poor Laura, how much am I bound to Heaven, that in mitigation of my deplorable Disasters, has rais'd me here the best of Friends, and one whose Sufferings strangely sympathize with mine. Fear not to imbrace with the tenderest Affect on this our Generous Protector, for the Charming Ariosto is a Woman.*

Wonder

Wonder and Amazement crowded thick upon *Carlo*, to find so strange a Revolution in so short a space ; but being confirm'd by the Mouth of Don *Ariosto* all that had pass'd, she was overjoy'd : with unspeakable satisfaction did these metamorphos'd Fair Ones unite ; and having spent some time in discoursing of small Occurrences of their Lives, they declin'd the principal Events to a more favourable opportunity, that the recital might not be troublesome or tedious to Don *Lelio*. For that night they parted infinitely pleas'd, and with such mutual Engagements of Friendship and Fidelity, that none could be greater or more substantial.

From this moment Don *Lelio* recover'd, so much doth the Satisfaction of the Mind contribute to the Health of the Body, in a short time he became perfectly well : But during his Sickness, which lasted Eight Months, you shall have an account of *Melantius*, whom we left in the *Florentines* Army.

To tell, with advantage, the wonderful and glorious Exploits of that young *Hero*, would be too mighty a Subject to joyn with this Trifle ; nor ought a less florid Pen than that of *Homer*, or *Virgil*, undertake so heroick a Task ; therefore let it suffice, that, after having perform'd beyond the Credulity of Man, it was his chance, during a Truce, to be

60 Love in Distress: or,

be sent with other Commanders, to recruit their Troops with *Neapolitans*, having Permission from the State. They arriv'd at *Naples* about the time of Don *Lelio's* recovery, and had march'd thro' the remotest parts of that Republick, in quest of Men, which they imagin'd might hide themselves in those Mountains, to avoid a Service attended with too many Hazards. They were now within a league of that sacred Wood which harbour'd the lovely unfortunate Don *Lelio*. This place *Melantius* had already found out, where he often sought to calm and sweeten the Frenzy of his Mind, which was almost fester'd by Despair.

One day he had retir'd hither, to seek a Sanctuary in the midst of Solitude; when striving to shake off his oppressing Fetters, he was convinc'd there was no evading the Sentence of the Deity, and therefore resign'd himself up as Love's cruel Martyr, and not without a harsh Contest betwixt Love and Honour. This Debate held him till he arriv'd, all hopeless, at the foot of the Poplar (we spoke of) whose beauty and exceeding largeness took up his consideration some small time; but when he espied those two Sentences on the Bark, writ in different Characters, who can describe his Confusion! oppress'd with a heavy weight of Fears, Doubts, and Jealousie, he was hardly able to support his
sinking

The Lucky Discovery.

61

sinking Fate. The Blood came thrilling from his panting Heart, his Sinews shrunk, and so strange a Lethargy came all over his fainting Senses, that he seem'd fix'd to the center; at length, with hard struggling to resist this powerful Charm, he regain'd his Spirits, but so faint and weak, he was forced to retire, and leave the pursuit of this Mystery till the morrow. But instead of rest that night, his dark melancholy Thoughts were fill'd with Illusions and Fancies, as perplexing as those he came from.

The next morning, which was one of the serenest and pleasantest imaginable, he was up with the first summons of the chirping Lark, and with greedy and thoughtful steps travers'd the enamel'd Fields, till he enter'd the Wood, where he began a curious search, examining every Tree, if possible, to make a farther discovery. He met with several little Sentences, but no more intelligible than the other; being come under the shady embracing greens of that proud Poplar, where he, the day before he was seiz'd with that anxious Trouble, had some Reflections on the hard measure of his Tyrannick Chains; but overcame them with a Resolution to continue his search.

He had not advanc'd far, but there presented to his Eyes two young beautiful Cavaliers, Arm in Arm, walking a deliberate
G
pace;

pace; and one at some distance behind them. These were the reciprocal and charming Don *Lelio*, Don *Ariosto*, and *Carlo*, who had chose this lovely Morn to ease the Secrets and Burden of their Souls. They seated themselves on the Bank of a pleasant and purling Stream, so close to the place where *Melantius* had conceal'd himself, that with ease he overheard all they said.

The first that broke silence was Don *Ariosto*, who, after some deliberation, thus began:

The History of Canace.

THE Story which I shall tell you will be brief, having no Adventure to entertain your Ears, but the unaccountable Passion of a foolish and credulous Woman.

My Birth, without ostentation, is as considerable as any Family this day in *Italy*, being Daughter of the Marquis *de Castiglione Della Stivere*, who married one of the Illustrious House of *Caraffa* in *Naples*; their Hearts were firmly united, and for some few years enjoy'd the calmest Serenity that a tender Passion, attended with Greatness and Plenty, could create: But Love, nor all

all this Tranquility, could not defend them from the Tyrannick Power of Death ; for, my Mother, after being deliver'd of me her fatal Offspring, at the end of thirteen months resign'd her Charms to the cold Tomb, leaving the Marquess my Father the most deplorable of Men ; which he gave evident demonstration of to the World, not being able to survive the dear Partner of his softer hours full three months.

My Parents being dead, I was committed to the charge of the Viscount *Bozzolos*, the noble and reciprocal Friend of my deceased Father, who in particular had left me his Ward, where I was brought up by the Viscountess (his Lady,) with all the care imaginable, till maturer years made me capable of the best Education, which was liberally bestow'd upon me. But ill Fortune still attended me, and bereft me a second time of an affectionate Mother : 'Twas a Loss difficultly to be supported by the disconsolate Viscount ; yet Time wearing out the Excess of his Sorrow, he began to be comforted in the blooming Virtues of one only Son, and me, now his adopted Daughter, in whom every little Advantage of Wit and Beauty was his Glory. I was now the absolute Mistress of his House, and so equally did he share his Favours between *Octavio* (so was his Son call'd) and me, that the

nicest Eye could not judge which stood fairest in his Affections. Yet an unkind turn of Fortune render'd us two the ingrateful Instruments of his Affliction ; for, our Infant Natures, which had made us Companions in our harmless Pleasures, united us in a strong Band of Friendship, which daily improving, as we ripen'd in years, at length produced a mighty flame : Not that this could have done us any prejudice of itself, being (as we understood after) what the Viscount ever wished : but not knowing how it would be accepted of, (and a timorous bashfulness that generally attends young Lovers) made us industrious to conceal a Passion which consequently prov'd my Ruine.

Joyn'd to *Octavia's* Virtue, Wit, and Beauty, he had all the Power and Art of fine Perswasion ; noble, facetious, and generous, but juster to his Friendship than his Love ; one who could never fail to make his Passion prosper ; with such Insinuation would he move, none could resist his Whispers and Address. In short, he made a Conquest of *Canace*, turn'd me to what he wish'd ; he won my Soul with honourable Vows, and for my Love return'd me double Interest. Thus, for some years, we enjoy'd a calm Content of secret, innocent, and virtuous Friendship. Wrap'd in these chaste Delights, we never once had Dreams of greater Bliss,
had

The Lucky Discovery. 85

had not the revolution of Affairs convinc'd us, that a Lover's Hopes has no Confinement.

Octavio, to be render'd more polite, being already Master of his Studies, was by his Father sent to read the World and Men.

This Separation was a fatal blow, to two united with an ardent Passion; but, being limited to just three years, we strove to bear it with a handsom courage, not parting without mutual Protestations of Love, Fidelity, of Truth and all. Here Passion swell'd so big she could not speak, and fill'd her Auditors with feeling pity. But a few Sighs being past, and having dried her lovely Eyes, she renew'd her Discourse, where 'twas broke off, and all that lavish Wishes could suggest, to Hearts then flaming with a pure Desire.

His Travels being accompanied with a noble Youth, the Confidant and Friend of all his Pleasures, (by Name *Alcidas*, of the great Family of *Pittis*, those mighty Competitors to the House of *Medicis*, whose Enmity has been so long contracted, that the colateral Branches of that House still bear the unjust Resentment of that Quarrel;) some minutes stole away without Regret; my Faith I plighted, and he swore to be for ever mine. But, oh! forgive my interrupting Sighs, Who can relate the fickle Chance

of Fortune, without grief, which more is to be blam'd than any breach of my *Octavio's* Promise?

A constant correspondence pass'd between us; and that we might with freedom write our Thoughts, our Letters were directed to one had been my Servant, who being now dispos'd of in the World, liv'd still with grateful Sentiments to serve me.

Having thus passed two Year, and better, my cruel Fate drew on apace,

Alcidas's business call'd him home in haste, when having made all ready for his Journey, *Octavio* recommended to his care, Letters to his Father, and to me. He was no Stranger to our constant Vows; *Octavio* had imparted all that pass'd, and left him as the trustiest of his Friends, with Justice to applaud his Love and Virtue. But see the strange reverse of Fortune, *Alcidas* came full fraught from poor *Octavia*, with Love, fresh Vows, and a thousand fond Addresses; which he defers to a kind opportunity, dispatching first his business to the State. He now became a constant Visiter, entertaining us with Stories of *Octavio*; the great delight I took in hearing of him, made me ne'r fail to be in company; yet no secure occasion did present, to make me happy with that dear Epistle. My firm attention, when he did display the Courage, Wit, and Beauty of my

my Lover, engag'd my Heart, my Ears, my Eyes upon him; but, oh! how often have I been surpriz'd to find his Colour come and go, his Speech to falter, with all the symptoms of a troubled Mind. This pass'd without my knowing what it meant, being resolv'd not to take notice of it; but yet, alas! too soon I knew the Cause. *Alcidas* being frequent in his visits, came on a day the Viscount was abroad; I entertain'd him with an easie Freedom, but the ungenerous Passion raging in his Breast, made him remiss in all the Gallantries he did observe, he look'd wild, turn'd pale, and answer'd, *Mal a Propos*, to all I spoke, seeming involv'd in anxious Cares and Trouble.

I knew not what to think, but fear'd the worst, and was just going to ask him his Disease, when I perceiv'd him rise, and come towards me trembling, he held a Letter in his Hand, his Eyes half drown'd in Tears, he had not power to speak, till a large shower was sprinkled at my Feet, then in the posture of an humble Suppliant, he thus began:

Madam, you see here prostrate at your feet one whom the Fates have done their worst to plague. The envious Gods throw heavy Curses on me, and rend my Soul with Horrour and with Death. I from my youth have been

Octavio's

OCTAVIO'S Friend, his secret, constant, honest, bosom Friend, lov'd where he lov'd, contemn'd where he despis'd, affected all Diversions he approv'd, loath'd Place and Person that he did not like: So equally, so firm, so true we lov'd, as we were made to pleasure one another. What shall I say? The Heavens have done their worst to make a Wretch of base undone Alcidas; this Friend, that dar'd to trust me with his Life, made me the Confidant to your Amours, and recommended to my faithful charge. Ten thousand tender Vows, and passionate Addresses, withal this Letter, (putting in my Hand the Billet which he held, but still went on) which I discharge, as I am bound by Honour. But, oh! when making to this happy Soil, why was I not blasted on the way, drown'd in the turbulent, rude, boisterous Floods, or shook by some rough Thunderbolt to Atomes? Then Friends might say, So fell just good Alcidas. But I must live to lose my Fame and Value, and dye a Blot and Scandal to my Name. Cursed be those Stars that did conduct me to those Charms which made a Captive of my Friend OCTAVIO; my Optricks are the same, my Heart is his, and where he loves, I cannot but adore. Then pardon, Madam, that you here behold your Slave reduced to love, without a Limit.

Here.

Here having stop'd, I knew not what to say : I must confess, I felt a great Compassion, his modest Speech could not incur my Anger ; his sense of Wrongs and Faults committed pleas'd me ; and I commiserating his ill chance, was going to return, when he proceeded :

Judge, Madam, the sad Conflict of my Heart, betwixt my Love and those most sacred Ties of Friendship. Must I then wrong my Friend? By all that's good, I will not play him false. And at these words he started up in haste, his Words and Gesture seeming much resolv'd, when suddenly his Ayre was wholly chang'd, and falling faintly at my Feet again ; But, oh ! (said he) my Heart is not my own ; who can resist those Charms I now behold ? And saying so, his Spirit sunk within him, and left him breathless by me on the Floor.

This Accident indeed disturb'd me much, I call'd for the Assistance of my Maid, and with our Industry and Care recover'd him. Then I began to plead against his Passion, to represent my Contract to Octavio ; still taking care to clinch upon his Honour, and blow those noble Sparks I still felt warm with Generosity, which I affirm'd would render him more Praise, more Joy, than the fruition of my dull Embraces : He heard with all the torment of Despair ; yet being byass'd

byass'd by his generous Genius, he did resolve to quit the Siege, and never, never more to see my Face; but parting, told me, when I heard his Death, which suddenly would invade my Ears, I should remember, none ever lov'd so well, nor none e'er suffer'd more.

In short, he seem'd fix'd in his Resolution, which fill'd me with a World of Satisfaction, hoping that Absence might effect his Cure, without that cruel Remedy of Death. I retir'd with a Mind transported with the Thoughts of my *Octavio*, read his dear Letter over twenty times, kiss'd and caress'd his Characters and Seal, and thought my self secure from this *Alcidas*.

But see the frailty of a Lover's Promise: 'Tis true, he made no more his common Visits, endeavouring with true care to avoid my presence; but the cross Destinies, that ow'd us Spight, led his dull pensive Steps into a Church where I was offering up my Hours Devotions: He came up to the Altar where I kneel'd, and plac'd himself a little distance from me, but knew me not, by reason of my Veil: Nor had I yet observ'd a Man so near me; for being wrap'd in a Seraphick Joy, my Thoughts had no relation to the World; when flinging up my Veil, to breath some Air, I heard the Voice of one in great surprize cry out, *Good God, defend*

send me; with that I turn'd, and to my troubled view appear'd *Alcidas*, pale as Death, unable to support his sinking Limbs, his Eyes all languishing with Love and Pain, spoke with more moving Rhetorick than a Tongue; yet, Pity being all I could afford, I left him in that most deplorable estate, whilst he, without the power to move my stay, made faint Petitions with his trembling Hands; but I, deaf and insensible as the Winds, fled, and with eager paces got me home, where I began to exclaim against this Chance, with angry resentment of *Alcidas*. How much he lov'd, I was too well convinc'd, and doubted the Event of such a Passion: I plainly saw how Willingly he strove, with Violence and Art, to quench his Flame, but yet the gnawing Tortures of his Breast insensibly excites him to relief: Two or three Interviews he got of me, fanned his soft Fire into a furious Blaze, which he no longer able to support, abandon'd *Friendship, Honour, Truth, and Virtue*, and gave himself intirely up to *Love*.

The first Advance he put in execution, was, to propose our Marriage to the *Viscount*, which several times was done without my Knowledge. The aged Seniors met in consultation, and struck the Bargain as themselves thought fit. *Alcidas's* Family was rich and noble, himself admir'd for a gallant Youth,

Youth, lov'd, valu'd, and approv'd of by the World; which pleas'd the *Viscount*, that I there should match, to Honour, and to Wealth, as I was born.

Things being thus decreed, 'twas requisite next to consult my Mind in this Affair, of which I had not entertain'd the least Suspicion; till on a day, pensive, and sad as Death, I chose the Garden for a safe retreat, to nurse that melancholy vapour which oppress'd me. After I had spent some time in troubled Thoughts, under the shady Branches of the Trees, my Maid drew near, and gave to me a Letter; the Character I had never seen before, which seiz'd me with a strange unusual Distrust; but when I open'd it, and found *Alcidas's* Name, Gods! how it struck me with a killing Fear! my feeble Limbs could hardly do their Office, to bear me to a little private Arbour, where I sat down to read the fatal Billet; the Contents thereof were these:

ALCIDAS to CANACE.

LOVE, the predominant Passion of the Mind, I find, can bear with no Competitor; how much I have strove to overcome its Power, witness thou great Controuler of our Reason: but the resistless Charms of Heaven-born Beauty has quite cashier'd that idle No-

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tion Honour, which serves but to betray our free-born Wishes to the Capricio of another's Appetite; a meer fantastick empty Vanity of our own making, and govern'd by our Wills, not Inclinations. Octavio loves, but much more doth Alcidas: Desire doth rage in every vital part; nor can my Soul subsist without your Pity: I can no longer suffer endless pains, Nature will prompt us Remedies to seek, and Reason teach us how to ease a Torment. Wonder not, Madam, that I have engag'd the Viscount's Pleasure, to secure you mine; all that can move an Avaricious Mind, shall lavishly be offer'd at your Feet; only resolve to make me truly happy, since my unbounded Passion will aspire to gratifie the tenderest of my Thoughts, and prosecute with vigour my Design, being positively destin'd ever Yours,

ALCIDAS.

I found by this, his Hopes were much exalted; the Viscount's Promise strangely did amaze me, for yet he had not told me his Intentions, nor did I dream I was so near a Ruine; what should be done, I could no way determine, but fate confounded at this cruel blow. When I perceiv'd the Viscount pass me by, a thousand Resolutions fill'd my Mind, which suddenly were lost without Conclusion: Sometimes I thought to charge him with Injustice, blame his too free di-

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sposal of my Heart, and positively refuse the Match. When milder Thoughts took place, I soon found this too rash; Honour and Virtue bound me still to Duty, since he had prov'd in all respects a Father: to tell him how *Octavio* and I lov'd, could no way get admittance from my Tongue; and Reason did suggest, that had he liked that Love, he would have first propos'd it.

Debates and Tumults rising in my Breast, I knew no Method how I should allay them. Oppress'd without the comfort of Relief, various Opinions ended in this last, of taxing him with an unkind proceeding: With that I quit the Arbour where I sat, and met the Viscount, who was now return'd. My Thoughts swell'd high to vent a Flood of Grief, but a respectful Awe confin'd my Tongue, and I had no more power left than just to ask him of his Health: However, long I was not in suspense; the Viscount fondly told me his Design, bid me prepare to make a happy Bride, and bless the World with an Illustrious Offspring. He told me, I must wed the brave *Alcidas*, with all the Advantages that Fate could give, or I could wish for. What I return'd I cannot now retain; my Thoughts were so disturb'd, I quite forgot my Answer, but sure I am I very much oppos'd it, which he imply'd to

Vir-

Virgin-Modesty, bidding me depart, and wisely make my Choice.

I left him almost ready to expire, got to my Chamber, where I wrote at large each circumstance and tittle to *Octavio*, bid him make haste to save a constant Maid, since Life or Death depended on his stay; but not a Letter ever reach'd his Hands, *Alcidas* intercepted all that pass'd, still pushing on with violence and care the consummation of a wretched Bliss.

Hard shift I made to get two months Reprieve, in hopes to have an Answer from *Octavio*, but seeing none, I found there was a Cheat; Rage and Resentment so possess'd my Mind, I gave myself up wholly to Despair, and did at the last extremity resolve to sacrifice myself when at the Altar. Things were now almost brought to a conclusion, the Wedding-day prefix'd, a Pomp prepared, where I was to surrender by compulsion a Hand, where I could not resign a Heart: but what prevented my unhappy fall, kills my sad Soul with the remembrance: *Octavio*, by some base officious Hand, had false Intelligence of this Amour, wherein they represented it my Choice, with all the aggravations could incense a man abus'd, as he believ'd he was: The Viscount's Letters told him of our Marriage, without the circumstance of my aversion, and ne'er receiving

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any one from me, confirm'd him easily, beyond dispute, that I was turn'd a fickle mean Ingrate.

What he design'd I never yet could learn, but he with speed came posting home to *Madrid*, a place where we for many years resided, enter'd the City privately at night, and got admittance in the Family; 'twas late, and we were all retired to Rest, which made him give Command not to disturb us; but no Repose could ease my weary Eyes, that almost were consum'd with Tears and Grief. I spent that night in Tortures beyond Wracks, dreading each moment which drew on the day when I was to be married to *Alcidas*.

This News *Octavio* learnt in his Discourse with an old Servant, that had let him in, which rais'd him to the height of Desperation. Some hours he trac'd the Room in great disorder, having dismiss'd the Servant to his Bed, with charge to keep it secret he was there; whilst bandying in his Thoughts Ten thousand Projects, ill Chance, and not Premeditation, forc'd an Act, which Love, and only Love, must justify.

Just as the Day peep'd thro' its thick Veil, and cast imperfect Shadows on the Earth, *Alcidas*, whose transported Thoughts ne'r rested, impatient of delay, came underneath

The Lucky Discovery.

77

neath my Window, and with a gentle Summons rais'd his voice to these Expressions, which as my Maid took down, I well remember.

The SONG.

ASTREA, wake, disperse thy Fears ;
Look up, behold, the Day appears :
Whilst I impatiently do wait,
The promis'd bliss, to crown my Fate.
Phoebus, lash on each fiery Steed,
Let Phaeton supply thy speed ;
My Heart does burn as well as bleed. }

Rise and outshine the splendid Light ;
Let every killing Grace invite,
And raise my Soul to such desire,
That Thought no farther can aspire :
Then every dying Sigh shall breath
The Extasie I do receive,
And those Delights I mean to give. }

Clear up those gloomy drooping Eyes,
And see the glorious Sun arise,
With brighter Splendor to survey
The Triumphs of this happy day :
Away with all disdainful Pride,
All coy Reserv'dness lay aside ;
Prepare to be a joyful Bride. }

Octavio did with pain attend the end, and being well convinc'd this was *Alcidas*, rush'd out upon him in a Storm of Rage, and with a Dagger smiting in his Breast, cry'd out, *This as a grateful Present from Canace, deliver'd by the Hands of wrong'd Octavio.*

Alcidas struggl'd with a weak defence, and strove to gain some time to draw his Sword, but 'twas too late, the Wound he had receiv'd laid him on the Ground, depriv'd of Life.

I from my Chamber plainly heard what pass'd, which render'd me half dead with Fear and Horrour; too well I knew *Octavio's* voice to be deceiv'd, and could not guess what Fate had brought him thither; a thousand dreadful Thoughts did multiply, and fill'd my Bosom with a throbbing Terror: hurried by distracted Fears, I flung a Night-gown carelessly upon me, and ran with open Arms to find *Octavio*, but found him in a manner overwhelm'd with Sorrow. The lovely Mourner, fix'd as in a Trance, stood weeping o'er the Body of *Alcidas*, when I with trembling Transport seiz'd upon him, spoke all the tendernefs that Love could dictate, but he contemning all my Sighs and Tears, forced himself violently from my Arms, made no Reply to any thing I said, but threw me from him with a scorn-
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ed Disdain, and left my Heart just bursting with this usage; whilst he with nimble flight stole from the City, got to his Servant left without the Gates, mounted his Horse, and rode for Life and Refuge, abandon'd by all Comfort to his Fortune.

Mad as a frantick *Bacchanal* I rav'd, and hardly could be hinder'd from pursuing him. My Maid had us'd all Arguments with Reason that might perswade a sense not wholly banish'd; but finding I was refractory to Advice, and hearing the trampling noise of Feet draw near, made no Apology, but pulled me in, and gently shut the Door.

This Quarrel reach'd no Ears but only ours, except the Servant, who had let him in, who finding him uneasie in his Mind, had modestly withdrawn to wait his Order, and accidentally being fallen asleep, not waken'd till the Fray was almost over: Scarce had my Maid chain'd up the outward Gate, but he approach'd us with disorder'd Care, making a strict Enquiry for *Ostasio*; Oh! how I sunk beneath my load of Fears, lest this loved cruel Man should now be ruin'd; Ingrateful as he was, I still ador'd him: 'Twas then, even tho' his Perjuries were fresh, I did forget the Outrage done my Heart, to think of Means for his Security: Stifling the Anguish of my linking Soul, I made a cunning search into this Servant,

80 **Love in Distress : or,**

vant, and learnt from him the time *Octavio* came, and that he was alone, disguised and dull, that none had seen him enter but himself, whom Business accidentally had kept up. This gave, through all my Fears, some little Hope, that probably there might be no Distrust, if I could bribe this man to Secrecie.

With subtile Instruments I prob'd his Breast, and found it at the bottom truly honest, his Interest and Advantage was *Octavio's*, whom he loved and served for many Years, admir'd in Infancy his budding *Vir-
tues*, and at those early days sought his *Aff-
fection*; yet I not failed, from time to time, to seal his vow'd Fidelity with powerful Gold. Having thus passed a sacred solemn Promise, next, to avoid Suspicion in the House, we stole with silent Caution all to Bed, to me the most detested place in Nature (because design'd for Rest and Ease); yet forc'd my Heart even far beyond my Will, since all this Care concern'd *Octavio's* Good.

Till nine of the Clock the next morning, I suffer'd all the racking Pains of Love, Fear, and Jealousie, and by this time Report was spread throughout the City, that *Alcidas* was slain, his Hat and Gloves, that drop'd in the Rencontre, being found drench'd in a dreadful gore of Blood, but for the Body,
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it could not be heard of, tho' careful strict enquiry was made. The Viscount startled at the fatal news, came trembling with surprize and grief, to tell me; at sight of whom, before he spoke a word, Reflection dash'd my tortur'd breast, and not being able to support its weight, I sunk from the Chair I sat, into a Swoon. He guess'd, by this, that I had been inform'd, and weeping, bore a part in my Affliction, pitying my Loss, and poor *Alcidas's* Fortune. Industry was us'd to bring my Life, but all their Application was in vain, till above half the day was spent, then I began to breath the Air of wild Distraction. *Madrid* was now the Seat of Wonder, Rage, and Sorrow; the Murder of so great a man was generally lamented: a search was now began throughout the City, both for the Assassins and wretched Corps, no House, or Vault, or Well escap'd a ransack, which gave me all the agony of Fear, for the unfortunate distress'd *Octavio*; yet all this diligence made no discovery, no Author found that had done such a deed, nor could *Alcidas's* Body e'er be heard of, which Riddle I could never understand. Our Family did suffer cruel Censures; my strange Aversion, and the fatal Place, the Time, nay, every Circumstance look'd odd, and gave too fair Pretences for Suspicion, but nothing could be prov'd; so that the Death
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of this Unfortunate receiv'd no other expiation than a publick Sorrow.

Contrary to my Hopes, 'tis true, I liv'd, but liv'd the most dejected She on Earth; mourn'd that this Tragedy was not my own, rather than be the Fate of all adored me: I saw the passionate *Alcidas* fall, and fear'd the utter loss of brave *Octavio*; his parting Blow kept still a fresh Idea of all the Cruelty that there was acted: I doubted his extremity of Mind would prompt him rashly to destroy himself; or, if he liv'd, he liv'd no longer mine. How wretched, how unhappy was my Life! my Fears augmented by perpetual Silence; no Tidings of *Octavio* could be heard, no Letter nor no Message did come near us, which much perplexed the melancholy *Viscount*; but I, that knew too much, and dreaded to know more, dy'd daily with the expectation of the worst. Sometimes I thought I was oblig'd to speak, that necessary Methods might be taken; but, oh! the Bloody Fact had so much Horror, that my Soul shrink at the remembrance, to tell the *Viscount* 'twas impossible, and likewise barbarous to disturb his Peace; besides, I knew not how he would resent my management, in keeping it so long. Thus restless, thus oppress'd, I sunk beneath the Burden of a Secret, which Time had made too dangerous to reveal. The small Relief of Hope

had

had almost left me : Silent and sad, I bore a tedious Pain, and only waited Death to give me Ease, when there arriv'd a Letter from *Octavio* ; the *Viscount*, unto whom it was directed, read it with all the smiling Ayr of Pleasure, but my prophetick Fear allow'd no Transport ; an unaccountable foretelling Sadness did overcome my Joy, to hear he liv'd ; I dreaded to enquire, yet knew not why ; but, oh ! too soon the *Viscount* did expose that Letter, which produc'd my final Ruin.

Octavio was now at *Portugal*, from whence he excused his long silence and stay, since 'twas not to be imagin'd he could return to *Madrid*, without endangering the loss of Life and Fortune, for Reasons which he guess'd the *Viscount* knew ; but he, good Man, did only apprehend these words as they related to the next that follow'd, which told him of a noble Match propos'd, between himself and a most glorious Maid, fram'd by peculiar Providence with care, and made a charming Abstract of Perfection ; *Aspatia*, happy *Aspatia*, was her Name, Daughter to the most Renowned Duke de *Almeyda*, born to command and conquer all that saw her : Crowds of adoring Slaves lay at her Feet, and gloried in their blest Captivity, the Universe did ne'r produce before a clearer *Virtue*, *Wit*, or solid *Judgment* ; nor Nature form so lovely or exact a *Beauty* ; For, oh !
(said,

(said she, in Sighs and floods of Tears) *I have heard her perfect and impartial Character.*

At this Don *Lelio* blush'd, and almost died with swift reflections on his vanquish'd Honour, and the kind lavish Praises of his Rival. The sad conceal'd *Melantius*, at this part, was ready with his Passion to expire, but chased with violence his Spleen away, to give attention to the mournful Sequel; whilst Don *Ariosto*, who had too much Grief to mind an alteration in Don *Lelio*, proceeded in this manner:

'Twas here my Fugitive discover'd Charms; nor Sorrow, Wit, nor Reason could withstand; such Charms, that when his Soul was all o'er dark and dismal Horror calm'd and dispers'd the melancholy Cloud, disarm'd the torturing Fury in his Breast, and plac'd a Troop of smiling *Cupids* there; 'twas not without encouragement he wrote to learn what he might hope for from his Father, on what Demands he might expect to gain a Beauty of that bounteous Wit and Dower, giving his Raptures latitude to speak the most he thought his Mistress could deserve.

This when I read, no Tongue can tell my smart, my throbbing Breast did heave, my Eyes distort'd, no doubtful Wretch that stood their latest Doom, was half so shock'd

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The Lucky Discovery. 85

at a condemning Sentence, speechless and cold I fell upon the ground, and only short-breath'd Sighs declar'd I liv'd ; but soon again I did recover strength, to fall a Suppliant at the Viscount's Feet, to whom I wept, and told the movingst Tale, that his sad Pressures, like to *Nioë's*, seem'd to have turn'd his reverend Frame to Stone. I wept, and told him even from our budding Loves, each circumstance of what I have now related, declar'd the Murder, and display'd my Wrongs, begging him to compassionate my Cause, since I was still compell'd to die or love him.

Grief stop'd his Tongue from making a Reply, but with his Head he bid me quit the Room, to give him liberty to vent his Trouble. I left him languishing to that degree, that Fate fate daring Reason in his Face, which pierc'd my very Soul ; as I departed, the look he gave me seem'd a last Farewel ; and 'twas with great compulsion I retir'd, to leave him to the rigid Scourge of Fortune, which, I perceiv'd, did handle him severely.

After some wretched hours of close retirement, he forc'd a settl'd Mind, and sent for me ; his Countenance appear'd without a Cloud, and every Action had an easie Ayr : Smiling, he rose, and took me by the Hand, and plac'd me on a Seat just by him, discour-
fed me with the greatest Moderation, that I

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could

could hardly credit what I saw. Maturely he discuss'd upon each point, and brought it subtilely to a kind result; told me, that since hard Fate had play'd its Game, our Care must be to help and crown all future managements with good Success; bid me not mourn what I could not redress, but learn of him to bear the Lash of Fortune.

I could not judge if this was Artifice, or whether he had overcome his Passion, yet parted from him much more satisfied, for he had promis'd to restore *Octavia*, if I would leave the Conduct to his Will. With humble resignation I consented, wholly to be dispos'd by his Command; for, I confess that my unparallel'd Love fell to the heighth of abject Supplication.

Within two days I went from *Madrid*, to pass the tedious minutes more sedate, in a still rural Villa of the Viscount's, that thirty miles stood distant from the City; there, there how many wretched hours flew, in the reflection of my dubious Destiny; no Shade, no Grove, but conscious of my Grief, my Tears supplied each Rivulet and Spring, and every melancholy Grotto spoke Despair, to the perpetual Volleys of my Sighs.

'Twas thus I spent the best part of a Year, whilst the kind Viscount acted things at home beyond the expectation of a Friend, and cunningly in my behalf he did proceed: he writ

Octavio

Octavio word, That his Fears need not any way oppose his coming home, for none could guess him guilty of that Crime; besides, the great Affair which he propos'd could ne'r be decided at that distance; therefore 'twas requisite he should return, to settle all in Peace for his advantage: giving some hints, that I was then retir'd, lest that should be a Motive for his staying.

It was these generous Letters once more induc'd *Octavio* to see *Madrid*; the Interview between him and the Viscount, I heard, was very passionate and moving, which being mitigated in few days, he introduc'd the mournful Tragick Tale, which was the fatal Cause of all our Evil: *Octavio* charg'd the weighty Sin on me, whose Falseness had betray'd him to that Mischief, and then the good old Man did weep, to vindicate my much-wrong'd Faith and Honour, owning the Act (as really 'twas) his own, to force me on a Match I loath'd and hated. At this *Octavio* sensibly was touch'd, and bore a friendly part in my Misfortune, but Love was banish'd, all that Stock he swore could never be exhausted, now was spent, and I was then reduc'd to sordid Pity: Nothing could move a kind Consent to see me, his Heart was absolutely now another's; for tho' upon the Fall of poor *Alcidas* he fled, to seek a noble Death, entirely despising Thoughts of Life, resistless Beauty,

Beauty, that o'erweighs the World, and balances bright Virtue with a Bubble, with her engaging Charms seiz'd on his wandering Soul, and laid her strict Commands on him to live; he could not view a Mistress so abused, nor stand the Test of my severe Reproaches; nor would he wed the Woman for whose sake his Hands had been imbrew'd in that dear Blood; or rather 'twas his new-born Flame prevail'd, to make him quit the Seat of his Confusion, and seek a Sanctuary of Repose on the soft Bosom of his chosen Bride.

Within six Weeks he went from *Madrid*, to prosecute his last-establish'd Love; nor were there any Offers could reclaim him: Which News the Viscount would have hid from me, but oh! I had too true Intelligence, Reason kept *Argus* Watch, tho' Love was blind; nor could my hundred Eyes be all deluded, too obvious was this last ungrateful part for me to be deriv'd, or Heaven to pardon. I scorn'd myself, that I could not condemn the Man that had so slighted and abused me; but, oh! impossible, I lov'd to that degree, not all my Wrongs had influence to reclaim; still I ador'd, still languish'd to retain the most perfidious Wretch that ever breath'd; in vain I sigh'd, in vain deplo'r'd the loss of all my Hopes, the false *Octavio*, in whom I yet discern'd Ten thousand

Thus you have heard the Fate of poor *Canace*, the most unhappy Maid that ever lov'd; hitherto all my Life has been one Plague, and what I am to suffer will be great, since now the utmost prospect of my Hope is Bankrupt to that last and wretched point of learning how to bear with Resignation.

Don *Lelio*, who had given strict attention to the relation of this mournful Tale, look'd on the lovely Innocent, who wept, and weeping pierc'd the Souls of those that heard her, like *April* showrs in Tears she mourn'd, which like the Heavenly Dew drop'd from her Eyes and veil'd the lustre of those beauteous Orbs, and, like an Evening *Zephyrus*, her Sighs whispering their murmuring Accents through the Air, wrought the Inanimates unto compassion. Thus Sorrow in its Splendor did appear, all moving, all transporting, all engaging, melting the tender Hearts of the Spectators, who gazing on the melancholy Maid, suffer'd the charming Object so to please, they never thought to interrupt her Grief, till they beheld her fall into a Swoon.

Melantius, all o'er Pity and Concern, was rushing from his Covert to her succour, when he perceiv'd Don *Lelio* clasp her close, laying her Head upon his panting Bosom, and chaffing gently with his Hands her Temples, this application summon'd back her life, which

which by degrees assum'd the glorious form,
 dispersing through her dying Face a Bloom
 that warm'd the very Heavens with Desire,
 and gave such Satisfaction to Don *Lelio*, that
 catching her with Rapture in his Arms; he
 cry'd, Cease, cease, my dearest Friend, to be
 perplex'd, Octavio may and shall be still thy
 own, if Time and your Disease will now permit.
Wonders ! 'tis Wonders that I have to tell you.

At this *Melantius* did again retire, who
 otherwise was going to appear, and make an
 offering of himself to serve them. The faint-
 ing Maid, recover'd by this Speech, rub'd off
 the Chagreen of all her Woe, and earnestly
 compos'd herself to hear; the which Don
Lelio having well observ'd, most readily pro-
 ceeded in this manner :

The History of Aspatia.

LET not an empty Name incur your
 Rage, nor be you too too partial in Re-
 sentment, then I'll confess myself to be *Aspa-*
tia, that very same *Aspatia* you distrust, yet
 Honour with so high a Character, she whom
 blind Fortune took delight to jilt, and make
 the Pastime of her fickle Humour; she who
 has met with too severe a Curse; yet con-
 scious of no weighty Sin but Love, your Ri-

val once, for evermore your Friend, if you will generously embrace the Offer; for know, it was my unexperienc'd years gave me that Title, and not Inclination, Gratitude may sometimes be mistook for Passion; no more was mine no farther my Concern: But I'll not dare to justifie *Ottavio*; he who insensibly abandons Charms the greatest Monarch would be proud to boast of, can no way make addition to a Crime, of which the World most justly will accuse him: Yet since 'twas you that first engag'd his Heart, and taught it how to love, and to resent, Pity a Mad-man's Frenzy, 'tis no more, and let me plead for him who is my Ruin.

At this she paus'd, and gave *Ariosto* time to view her with Amazement, and Disorder, Fear, Hope, and Jealousie at once attack'd, and batter'd her with fierce Artillery; she look'd upon her sometimes as a Foe, sometimes a Friend, and knows not which to think her, but prudently her Judgment did suspend, till she had heard the sequel of the Story.

Never till now *Melantius* was so lost, to see *Aspatia* by him in that habit, within the compass of his Arms, there in a Country desolate, remote, far from her noble Father and Relations, weeping to craggy Rocks and senseless Trees, far from that Princely Splendor once she us'd to grace the Courts and Palaces of *Lisbon*, where glorious Captives waited.

waited at her Feet, proud to be chose to do some little Service, and where he had imagin'd her in all the Gaiety of Youth and Pleasure, triumphing o'er a Crowd of bleeding Hearts, stabbing by Frowns, transporting by her Smiles, beyond the Wilkes of fantastick Woman: What could this mean? by what strange Miracle found he *Aspasia*, on the Verge of *Naples*? That sprightly Beauty that enslav'd the World, tracing a solitary Grove in Sorrow, wasting the Treasure of her Youth in Exile; oh! how amazed, how Thunder-struck was he, to see that unexpected killing Object, the Mistress of his Soul before his Eyes, with all those Charms that made him first her Captive! her whom he unadvisedly abandon'd, whose very Memory he once contriv'd to banish, too late alas! he found he was deceiv'd, found that the Gods had Interest in her Cause, and took peculiar care to make it prosper; 'twas hardly he gave credit to his Eyes, but really did believe he saw a Vision, wishing perpetual Sleep to charm his Senses, still to retain that dear deluding Phantasm; but when he recollected from that Thought, and found each Faculty was sound and perfect, his Wonder and Confusion did encrease, to know what God, what Fate had brought her thither: All angry Resentments left his Breast, inspired by Wishes and Love's softer Fire, the

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little God fate playing in her Eyes and shew'd him all the Pleasure, not the Pain, of dazling Rapture and more fond Desire, inviting him by all those little Arts that first betray'd his easie tranquil Mind to the subjection of his wanton Snares, to curse his Rigour, yet adore his Power : Once more he triumphs o'er his bleeding Heart, shot thick his Arrows, and secur'd his Throne, tickled him with the Feathers of his Dart, till unperceiv'd he fell upon the Steel, and smiling at his Wound, suck'd in the Poyson.

Don *Lelio's* Dress did render him more fair, exposing Beauties that were made to conquer ; Charms that had been conceal'd lay open now, Limbs the most regular and most surprizing. Lost in a mighty Extasie, he gaz'd, dying and languishing for the possession ; not one past Injury did grate his Soul, or discompose its ravish'd Entertainment ; Resentment fled beyond the very Clouds, and buried all his Wrongs in dark Oblivion. The Nymph, all chaste and innocent, did look youthful, engaging, beautiful and tempting, and to his Eyes appear'd without a blemish : None but his wretched self he did accuse and tax with too much Folly and Credulity, who rashly had forsook, for the first Fault, the most deserving Creature in the World : If she had Sence, he knew she must resent it, and therefore was distracted

with his Fears, how to retrieve the Interest he had lost: With Looks unguarded, and unbounded Thoughts, he gave away the remnant of his Soul, each wandring Faculty, caught by surprize, was made a second and substantial Conquest, prompt by Distrust and violent Desire, his breaking Heart no longer could resist, but was just falling at her Feet for Mercy, when the distressed fair One thus broke silence, and Curiosity stop'd his proceeding:

That I am Daughter to the Duke *Antonio de Almeyda*, I blush to own, having the least deserv'd that worthy Lot, and most abused my Interest in that Name: My Mother, who deriv'd from no inconsiderable Branch of the *Piacenze's* Dukes, had all Advantages that could compleat a Beauty; for, besides the rare Perfections of her Person, she had Wit, Fortitude, Judgment, and Virtue, which begot her the Applause, Admiration, and Esteem of all that knew her: she was universally ador'd, and industriously sought for by all the neighbouring Princes in *Italy*; nor did a Stranger pass throughout the Country, that made it not his chiefest care to see the fine *Charlett*, so was she call'd.

Amongst the rest, it was the Duke *d'Almeyda's* chance (who was just then come to that Title by the Death of his Father) to travel through *Parma*, where she then resided;

ded; he resolv'd not to quit the City till he had a sight of this lovely celebrated Beauty, which was no hard matter for a Man of his Quality. He saw, and was convinc'd, gave up his Freedom at the fatal View, and ever after own'd himself her *Slave*.

Their Amour was romantick and entertaining, but too tedious to recite here, therefore passing over all Preliminaries, we arrive at their Nuptials, which was very noble and magnificent, with splendid Masques, Balls and Tournaments, wherein all the youthful Nobility assembl'd, and perform'd diversity of Gallantries: Three years after Marriage the Duke stay'd in that Country, by the Intercession of his Wife, who found no small Regret to leave her Native Soil; but at length, urg'd by necessity of some weighty Affairs, wherein the Duke had been a very considerable Loser, they were forc'd on their Journey at a very inconvenient time for my Mother, who was then eight months gone with Child of me, Heaven had already bless'd them with a Son, whose graceful Aspect promis'd early *Virtues*: Not much above one year they had enjoy'd him, when they set forward towards *Portugal*; they met with a pleasant Land Journey, and imbarqued with as fair a Prospect, but that over-ruling Power that finds it expedient sometimes to dash our sweetest Cups with Gall, presented them a

too too bitter Draught, which when compell'd by Fate, there's no Man can resist.

They were within some few hours sail of shore, when the Heavens overcast, and a dreadful Storm arose, which prov'd only a direful Omen of their Misfortunes, for in less than half an hour it clear'd again to pleasant calmness and serenity ; when from the Top-mast-head they 'spied a *Ship* that gave them chase, with all the sail that she could make they crowded down upon them ; they were in some consternation and surprize, but the Duke, whose noble *Soul* could ne'r admit of Fear, took all the most convenient methods for defence that the short time would give him leave. Now, by the nigh approach, to their Perplexity, they discern'd her to be a famous Pyrate, who for many years had scor'd those *Seas* ; no way they had to escape, for their Adversary having the Wind, soon boarded them. The Duke at this time perform'd Wonders, but having few Assistants besides his own Attendants, and not being well provided for what so little was expected, after a stout defence, which startled much the Pyrates, by desperate Multitudes he was repuls'd : They being now the Masters of the *Ship*, grew insolent, and rifled all their Treasure, clapping the *Sailors* under Hatches, and making all their Prize. My Mother, who had endur'd all the violence of Fears and

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The Lucky Discovery. 101

Terrour, at this last Scene of immediate Death or Slavery, fell with the direful Imagination into a Swoon. The Duke being luckily by, receiv'd her in his Arms, and altho' his Reflections did present him with too clear a Prospect of their Woe, he us'd all the Indulgence and tender Applications that could recover her, and encourage her to bear Fate with a Patience worthy of herself. It was a considerable time before he was convinc'd she liv'd, and the fatal demonstration serv'd but to involve him in a greater Doubt; for the warm Perswasions he had whisper'd, summon'd back some fleeting Hopes, and untimely disclos'd her Eyes, to be a Spectator of young *Frederick*. (their only Child) and his Nurse, just forc'd on board the Pyrate. This Sight renews her former Grief, and sunk her with the weight of Desperation: Nor was the Duke, with all his Fortitude, now in condition to address a Comfort, he saw his Wife expiring at his Feet, his Child a Captive to insulting Villains, and he the sinking Prop that should relieve them; Love, Pity, Charity divides his Breast, and equally demands his kind Assistance, but all the Means was taken from his Hands, and he had nothing left but his bare Wishes, which was reduc'd to wish himself, and his dear Wife, next Prey, that they might suffer all together.

Whilst he stood in this Extremity of

Care, a violent and unexpected Hurricane arose, and separated the Ships, which lay grappled together, the fury of the Tempest drove them so fast, that in short time they lost sight of each other: The Seamen, who were very industrious at their Plunder, were most of them in the Long-boat, conveying off their Booty, and but two at this time left on board the Duke, abject Rascals, who finding their Necessity, meanly were imploring for their Lives, but the Duke, who was wholly taken up with his *Sorrow*, had but just reason enough left to release his own *Seavien*, to whose Mercy he left them, and from whose hand they receiv'd their Deaths, whilst he employ'd himself in the recovery of my Mother: Grief, and the cruel Sufferings she underwent had taken full possession of her Heart, and it was with great difficulty they kept her *Soul* and *Body* together, till they made a Port in *Algarves*, call'd *Tavila*, where she had not been two days, but she was deliver'd of me, some time before the usual season, and deliver'd up her Life at the same minute: My Father was the most afflicted Man in the World, and had it not been in consideration of me, which oblig'd him to preserve his Life, in care to mine, he hardly had surviv'd my Mother. He stay'd not long after the Funeral-Rites, but took me, with my Nurse, to a House he has near *Ville-Nenove*, where he liv'd a dis-engag'd

engaged and retired Life, till I attained the Years of Fourteen, at which time he thought it convenient to introduce me into the World, that I might be the better capable of acting for my self: We then remov'd to *Lisbon*, where we liv'd with all the Grandeur that could render an advantage to my blooming Years, I had the Priviledge of visiting the Court, and some publick Places, which, in a short time, got me not a few Admirers. The Duke was willing to see me well disposed of, and encouraged those of the most Illustrious Families, and of the greatest Characters, for me to make my Choice; but I being only taken with the Gallantry and Address, liv'd with a cold Indifference to the Sex, and could not be prevail'd upon to Marry.

It was at this time, that my small Beauty gained some little Fame at *Lisbon*, when *Octavio* appear'd at Court, and was generally reported, a Noble Cavalier; but one whose nice Virtues were eclipsed by a profound Melancholly, there lack'd not those who imputed it to Love, and apply'd it to several of our Beauties, yet knew no more then from their bare Opinion; he had the good luck to be particularly receiv'd amongst the Ladies; and I confess my self, that often I have view'd him with some Pleasure: He had something in his Aspect that attract-

ed all Eyes, and something in his Disposition so engaging, that there was no beholding him with bare Indifference; yet mine was Admiration, and not Love, which afterwards I was too dear convinc'd of: Several small Services I had receiv'd, which past with me but as his common Humour, till a more evident Address too fatally inform'd me; Madrigals, Songs, and *Billet-doux*, he sent; by Night with Sighs and Serenades he entertain'd me; by these and a thousand other ways, he oft declared the Message of his Heart, which found more free access into my Breast, than all the Gallantry I knew before; yet I had Conduct to conceal my Thoughts, and gave him not the least Encouragement, but rather seem'd vex'd at his ill plac'd Passion; some Months pass'd off with this Amusement, without much Love, or much Consideration, till daily Services inhaunced the Store of mighty Favours, that I began to fear the Payment; hitherto he had no access into our House, and found it difficult to gain my Presence, till a most fam'd remarkable Exploit, gave him a fair, and plausible Pretension:

One Day at a famous Match of Hunting, where most of the Nobility (then residing at *Lisbon*) participated of the Diversion, Ladies as well as Men, were in the Field to see the Pastime, and partake of the Chace, I being

being mounted on a fierce *Arabian* Courser, followed the Game with earnest satisfaction; my Inclination to those Country Sports, and the Rural Life I had been used to, gave me opportunity to make my self a compleat Horse-woman: I was now hot in pursuance of the Chace, and gave full Reins to my Horse, without consideration, when a Servant followed me to deliver a Tablet I had dropt, which I turning back to receive, just as I was at the brink of a rapid River, and not checking my speed, the Horse not being used to boggle at any opposition, took the Water, and before I could recover, plung'd into the Stream, where with the violence of the Flood, and struggling of the Beast, I lost my Saddle, and was left floating.

All that saw this Accident, were in great Consternation how to deliver me from the danger, yet was cautious of themselves, but the Duke my Father, urg'd by his Paternal Love and Care, desperately pursued me into the River, where instead of preserving me, he met with the same Misfortune, and we had like to have sunk together, had not the Brave *Octavio*, (who was then on the top of a Bridge built over the Stream) seeing our Distress, quitted his Horse, and like *Persius*, or some Guardian Deity leapt in to save us: The Event answered his Design, for
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after some little struggling, he recovered us both, and swam with us out in each Hand in Triumph.

This God-like Action begot Admiration in all the Spectators, but for our parts, that had not yet sence to know our Safety, or Deliverer, stupid, and half dead, we were conveyed to a Grange within view, where the best means was used to recover us: And here *Octavio's* Gallantry was more observable, in refusing to shift his Cloaths till he was confirm'd we lived.

From these generous Actions, (after the Recovery of a dangerous Sickness it gave us both) *Octavio* became the Darling Friend of the Duke, and their Intimacy grew so remarkable, that it was a great Chance to find them separate; a long while *Octavio* was so brave to stifle all his Hopes, with feigned Indifference, being loath to urge the mighty Obligation, till Love, resistless Love overcame his Will, and added greater hopes to gratifie his Passion, no longer could he bare the hard Restraint, but willing to improve his fleeting Hours, began a more solemn Court then ever yet he had pretended to. From my Youth, and Unexperience, and the particular Esteem I had ever found for *Octavio*, I was inclinable to believe I Loved, he being the first Man that could ever warm me into a Liking, and considering the Duke

Duke was just upon the Design of Marrying me, Gratitude, and some small Inclination, made me not violent to oppose a Flame, I thought I could better dispend with than any; but the Duke, since the Misfortune of his Wife and Son, having fixt his future Bliss, and utmost Hopes in me, and lived Unmarried to make me Great and Fortunate, could not bate the Thoughts of my Separation to another Kingdom; and I really believe there was nothing but *Ottavio's* being a Stranger, disappointed his Wishes; he declined it with all the Complaisance in the World, conferring daily Favours on him, and generous Offers to compensate, if possible, for the Lives he had received at his Hands, without so dear an Acknowledgment, not forgetting private Commands to me, not to allow or encourage his Address: but I, from the Duke's Affection to him, not expecting this Repulse, had rashly advanced too far, and tho' it was not difficult for my Heart to recant, yet Duty obliged me to refer my self to my Father, and Honour to excuse my self under the same pretext to him.

Affairs were in this manner between us, when *Ottavio* was summoned Home to *Madrid*, which he evaded a long time, nor would not depart till I had promised him, if he could gain the Duke's Consent, he should not

not fail of mine ; we had private Interviews by the Assistance of my Maid ; where through his Intercession, I assented to a Correspondence during his Absence, for the grateful Sentiments I had entertained of him since his rescuing us from Death, made it difficult for me to deny him any reasonable Request.

With these Assurances, tho' not without great Regret, he set forward his Journey ; I was not under the easiest Circumstances when we parted, but Time, and a more dear, yet cruel Remedy, soon disingag'd those Cares.

Melantius, Son to the Marquess *de Leganes*, just return'd from his Studies, (a young Cavalier, Charming as a God, Beautiful to a Wonder, Wise as *Apollo* ; Just, Heroick, Affable and Courteous, Gallant and Engaging ; a Face, a Shape, and Wit form'd for Love and Success :) (Heavens ! I Rave) became my Lover. Then, and not till then, my panting Heart, learnt to distinguish a real Passion, from that of an imaginary Engagement. Gods ! With what new Fire was my Breast inflam'd, and how exquisite was the dear sence of all my Joys and Doubts ; and how different from the feeble warmth I felt before ? But to Behold him was too great a Bliss : To hear him Speak, or Touch him, was a Heaven of boundless Plea-

The Lucky Discovery. 109

Pleasures, and thrilling Satisfaction, and to imagine more, was not to live.

Scarce had she ended this last Accent with a Sigh, but *Melantius* (charm'd to an unexpressible degree, flung himself at her Feet, (forgetting all past Jealousies, and Fears), throughly convinc'd of his Mistake, with eager Kisses he devour'd her Hand, sigh'd on her Knees, and panting on her Breast, as soon as e'er his Passion would give leave, with a transported Joy, he burst into these words: *Be false! Be false! if possible you can; still, still I am born to Love and to Adore you.*

Aspatia thus luckily and strangely surprized, could hardly give a credit to her Senses, and it appear'd incredible to all, a too substantial Blessing to be real, Dumb with Amazement, silently they gazed, and gave themselves intirely up to Wonder: But *Aspatia*, whose more particular Interest had involved her in a thousand doubtful Apprehensions, had much ado to recover from the Agitation, either excess of Joy or Fear had drove her to. As soon as she was convinc'd by the tender Imbraces of her Lover, that it was no Illusion, she soon would have assum'd a Neglect and Repentment equivalent to the Injuries she had receiv'd, but Inclination, and Reflection that he had took her at 100

critical an advantage to impose an Affectation, the dispens'd with Form, and raising him from the Ground, with Eyes all Love and languishing, she said, Rise to my Arms, thou dear, thou cruel Man, and once again receive thy own *Aspatia*. *Melantius* sprung at the Invitation to the Bosom of the Fair, which was panting him a Welcome, where in equal Raptures, they were a long time clasp'd, till *Aspatia's* Curiosity (to know by what prodigious Chance, they had so wonderfully met) rous'd her. *Melantius*, after a Complement to *Don Ariosto* (whom he saluted by the Name of *Canace*, giving her to understand he had overheard her Story, and wishing her as quick a turn of Fortune) and some kind notice of *Carlo* (whom he discovered was the trusty *Laura*) gave them a punctual and diverting Narrative of his Life, from his quitting *Portugal*, to that happy Minute.

By this time a Reconciliation and Intimacy was seal'd on all hands, and their Stomachs giving them a Summons, they adjourn'd to the Cabin, referring the Conclusion of *Aspatia's* Story to the Afternoon; which when she had finish'd, and *Melantius* was confirm'd his Mistress had been Constant, transported at the News, he press'd returning Home, that they at once might satisfy their Parents, and compleat their own

The Turkish Discoveries.

own Felicity: *Aspatia*, weary of that way of living, required no persuasions to a thing she already was impatient to put in execution. *Don Ariosto*, who had determin'd never to leave *Aspatia*, was doubly now induc'd to accompany them to a place, where probably she might retrieve her Lover; only desiring the Liberty to continue the Habit she was then in, till some fair occasion presented for her to change it.

Thus being agreed, *Melantius* took leave for that Night, that he might discharge himself from his Command in the Army, and early the next Morning return'd with *Adontal*, whom he order'd with *Spirid* to provide for their Departure; where we will leave them on that Design, and return to *Octavia*, whom we left almost Expiring.

Grief, Disappointments, and the Anguish of *Octavio's* Wound, had reduc'd him to a violent Fever, which daily increasing to the hazard of his Life, it was thought expedient, to send for a Priest to perform the last good Office: *Adrian* a *Franciscan* Fryar in the Neighbourhood, a pious and judicious Man, heard his Confession; after which Introduction, he became a constant Visitor; something in *Octavio's* Person won his Soul, and he resolv'd with care and diligence to serve him; his Distress and ill Accommodation mov'd him with Compassion. This

Kindness was observ'd by poor *Octavio*, who as far as his Ability, made a grateful Return. The good Humour and Sanctity of Father *Adrian*, had begot so great an Esteem in *Octavio*, that at Intervals he made him his Confident; and now finding himself grow worse, he trusted him to acquaint the Viscount *Barzolos*, where, and under what Circumstance he was, which a long time he had been a Stranger to. Upon the first notice the good old Viscount, fearing the Desolation of his Family, and inevitable Ruine of all his Joys, made no stay for reply, but without consideration of the Fatigue, got all things ready, and the next Day set Sail for *Portugal*; the Ship put into the Port of *Velle-Neue* for Water, and the Viscount impatient to see *Octavio*, tho' 'twas with more trouble to a Man of his Age, yet for more dispatch, resolv'd to perform the rest of his Journey on that less dangerous Element: He took but the respite of the Night, and the next Morning mounted Horse for *Porto*, with Alacrity and Speed, he set forward, being attended for twelve Miles together with a cool Breeze that render'd the blushing Cheeks of *Aurora* very refreshing: About this time he arriv'd in a pleasant Vale, (where the Duke *de Almeyda*, and the Marquess *de Leganes* were a Hunting) the Viscount's Horse starting at the approach of

Peace, and took care, as much as possible, to conceal my concern from her; but when I found my self oppress'd, took Horse, and under pretence of taking the Air, privately indulg'd my Sorrow.

In one of these melancholly Humours, as I was moving along the Shore, by the vast Billows that came rolling in upon me, and the mountainous height of the swelling Surges; I rais'd my Eyes that were fixt on the Ground, to contemplate that Emblem of the impetuous Storm in my Breast, when I perceived a Vessel struggling with the Wind, endeavouring with all her Skill to plow her Passage to the Island of *Sicily*, whilst the swelling Seas repuls'd her Course, and the rapid Waves forc'd her back as fast: This Contest of the angry Floods, and the Sailers Task to oppose 'em, took up my Thoughts, till I saw the raging Tempest rush the shattered Vessel on the Sands before me, where Waves after Waves dash'd on her Sides with their resistless force, starting the Planks, and leaving Breaches that unsatiably receiv'd the Torrents that pour'd in, till Drunk with the Deluge, she tumbled down, and sunk with her Freight and most of her Men; Despair or Hopes made some attempt to stem the Tempest, others to catch at Planks, but all in vain, none could float to Shoar, but unable to sustain the Conquering Main, sunk in the Gulph to the

the *Stygian Lake*; except a few, whose luckier Thoughts had prompted them to secure the Long-Boat, and with great difficulty saved their Lives.

I made up to the place where they Land-
ed, being curious to know their Circum-
stance, and found they were all Sailors;
but one who was their Captain, and a Boy
about a Year old, very Beautiful and richly
Clad; I was strangely taken with the Child,
who infinitely resembled mine, and enquir'd
his Birth and Country; but they very read-
ily told me, That therein they could not
satisfie me, for they knew not themselves,
confessing they were Pirates, and that in their
Course towards *Portugal*, had met with a
considerable Prize, and again lost it in the
late Wrack; their Child they imagined to
be by its Splendour a Nobleman's aboard
the Ship they Plunder'd, but whose they
could not tell; for being suddenly separated
by a furious Storm, they had not time to
secure more than the Child and his Nurse,
who either for fear or spite dyed in half an
hour after she was taken; the Child was pre-
served in hopes of Ransom, or rather Provi-
dence design'd him for a better Fate.

The Duke de *Almeida*, who had attend-
ed with violent Emotions this part of the
Story, was no longer able to forbear inter-
rupting him, but with an insupportable A-
gony, and the most violent Concern in the
World,

World, he enquired what Fortune since had attended that instant: The Viscount wondering at his Disturbance, only made answer, *I hope he Lives*; and began to examine, if he had any Interest in such a Loss? The Duke in Tears briefly related his Misfortunes; his Ship-wrack, the Death of his Wife, and loss of his Child; which being ended, he prest with all violence to know if he had no Mark, no Remnant of his Cloaths, by which he might be convinc'd of his Hopes.

The Viscount having earnestly heard him, reply'd, How glad am I, and how easily shall I depart this Life, since I leave my *Octavio* so brave, so good a Father, for I am more than perswaded he is your real Son, look on this Signet, took from off his Neck, wherein a handsome Cypher is ingraved, and call it to remembrance if you can.

No sooner had the Duke survey'd it, but with all the Joy imaginable he cry'd out, Thou infallible Oracle of Truth, I am now confirm'd from these dear Characters which contain the Names of my self and Wife, that it is the same young *Frederick* wore, when he was Ravish'd from us; and thou my *Guardian Angel*, let me know, by what strange Providence you have preserv'd the first dear Pledge of all my sacred Vows, that in my trembling Arms I may receive the happy Author of my future Peace, and pant upon thy Breast ten thousand Blessings, before my joyful Soul expire with Transport. The

The Viscount much surpriz'd at this Discovery, and much pleas'd to find he had fostered such a Noble Off-spring, proceeded to his Relation.

Sir, (said he) this Child I Ransom'd from the Pirates, with no inconsiderable Sum of Gold, and with an unusual satisfaction bore him Home with me, where having told the whole Adventure, it was look'd upon as a particular Regard Heaven had of my Interest, and therefore had thus miraculously sent this Child to propagate my Name and Family, in lieu of that I had lost; my Wife being from some Reasons so possess'd by the Physicians, to be past hopes of more, it seem'd plausible to me, and from a wonderful Affection I had took to the Child, I was inclinable to believe it the Decree of Heaven, and immediately with the Consent of my Wife, Adopts him; and from his strange resemblance of my own, nam'd him after the Deceas'd *Octavio*: This was manag'd with all prudent Care and Privacy, and had the good luck never to be suspected, which was a great Satisfaction to all but my Wife, whom it had a quite different Effect on, for the mighty Pleasure she saw us take in the early Virtues of that Infant, rack'd her with Imaginations of the double Joys she had received from her own; which her Humble, Modest Disposition endeavouring to conceal from me, for want of Redress in time, broke her Heart.

From

From hence the Viscount mix'd not a tittle of *Octavio's* Life, to that of Fryar *Adrian's* sending for him to a place near *Porto*, where *Melantius* left him wounded. *I was hasting thither* (said he) *when I met with this ill accident, which now I bear with less regret, since it has procured me your acquaintance, and discover'd so happy a Secret*: concluding it was alwaies his Design before he died, to tell *Octavio* of his obscure Birth, that he might esteem himself doubly engag'd to the Interest of the *Bozzo's*, (that had chose him when Fate had reduc'd him to the station of a *Plebeian*) as likewise to put him upon some glorious Attempt, to demonstrate to the World, that his Birth was noble, which he ever believ'd, tho' till that lucky minute could never be convinc'd of: *Notwithstanding* (said he) *I have made it my search this five and twenty years, I wonder'd much I could find it out; for besides the token of this Cypher, and his swadling Clothes, he has that infallible Mark.* In haste the Duke did interrupt him there, *A Star my Frederick bears upon his Breast. The same has my Octavio,* cry'd the Viscount. Not till this period did the Duke recollect how much this long Discourse might discompose the Viscount, and being thoroughly convinc'd, and overjoy'd at this Discovery; caressing him with all the Gratitude imaginable he left him to Repose.

Immediately he order'd his Coach to fetch

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Octavio,

Octavio, waiting with violent impatience his arrival. By this time *Octavio* was pretty well recover'd, and not hearing from the Viscount, was preparing with all expedition for Italy, when the Duke's Orders arriv'd: He knew not what to think of the Invitation, but knowing the Duke to be in all respects the most nice in Honour, he could not apprehend a Trick; besides, the Equipage and Address had too good a face of Friendship to be cover'd with Deceit; he scorn'd to distrust, and resolves to comply, and in order to that acquaints his Friend *Adrian* with this Summons, desiring he would accompany him; *Adrian* readily consented, and they set forward on their Journey. They were no sooner arriv'd, but the Duke met *Octavio* with Tears of Joy, telling him, That Providence had put it in his power to compensate a little for the Favours he had receiv'd from him, for Heaven, in some small Capacity had made him the happy Instrument of serving his Father, who in his speed to visit him had broke his Leg, and now lay dangerously ill in his House, at whose request he had sent for him, (the fear'd) to take his last Farewel.

Octavio return'd the Duke the heartiest Thanks Gratitude could frame; and having curs'd his Stars and Destiny, for drawing in to such Troubles all that he lov'd or valued, he beg'd to be conducted to his Father; the Duke himself was his Guide, who drew open the

the Curtains, and presented him to the Viscount. *Othello* soon recall'd him to remembrance, tho' his Sickness had much transform'd him, and falling on his Knees, implor'd his Blessing, and then religiously beg'd Heaven for his Recovery. He desir'd him to attribute the Misfortunes he had brought on his Relations and Friends, as the heaviest Plague on his own Head, it being the Decree of Heaven, and not within his power to avert.

The Viscount embraced him with all tenderness, and after a pious Benediction, told him, 'twas easie to forgive him any thing, for great was his Paternal Care and Love; this joy was mighty for his Welfare, which he demonstrated by no common satisfaction.

But now (said he) prepare, my dear *Othello*, to hear a most surprizing, unexpected Story; you are no more my Son; turn on the Duke, and pay that due Obedience, to that most glorious Author of your being, but when I am dead and gone, (as soon I fear I shall) with grateful thoughts remember how I lov'd you. This Speech confounded so *Othello*, that he began to think his Brain distemper'd; but the Duke not having patience to wait longer, fell on his Neck, and told him it was true: he sent immediately for the Marquis *de Beaugency*, and Father *Adrian*, to whom at large he did relate each circumstance the *Viceroy* had told him, as well as that of his own Knowledge; which agreeing

So exactly, even to the Mark on his left side, it soon put the reality beyond dispute. This when *Orelia* heard, and was so well convinced of, with all submission he addressed himself to his new Father, who received him in his Arms with exquisite delight, pouring forth Blessings on him, and confirming him his by the Name of *Frederick*, which Name for the future he order'd him to assume. *Frederick*, after this, applied himself to the *Viscount*, professing all Acknowledgments a generous Soul could shew for such unparallel'd Favours: He told him he would still esteem him as a Parent, serve and obey him with the Duty of a Son, and to the World declare his noble Usage.

This News was soon dispers'd thro' *Portugal*, and every one congratulated the Duke's good Fortune: But poor *Frederick's* Soul was so oppress'd with Sorrow, that all the Satisfaction he receiv'd from this Discovery, was that since his Birth had doubtful been, he prov'd a Branch of such a noble Stock, and luckily was hinder'd from adding to his many Sins, by marrying of his Sister: But the Blood of *Alcidas* lay so heavy on his Breast, he ne'r had Hopes of any real Comfort, therefore was under much concern, that these Affairs had prevented his design of leading a Monastick Life, which his own Desire and *Fryar Adrian's* Advice did prompt him to, by way of Expiation for the Murder of his Friend,

Friend. I was with these Hopes, had kept the Fryar with him, flattering himself, that one day he should have an Opportunity to put in execution what he so much desir'd.

This he resolv'd, but otherwise Fate decreed; for in an Evening, to compleat their Joy, (some three months after this Discovery, which minutes he melancholy had pass'd) enter'd the Room (where they were all assembled) *Malantius*, *Aspatia*, *Clauvius* (in her Cavaliers Dress) *Lance* and *Adam*; which unexpected Guests amazed them all: Their Wonder was so great, that for some time they gaz'd confusedly upon each other, without the power of moving or of speaking. *Aspatia* first broke silence, who prostrate at her Father's Feet, with all the Rhetorick that she could use, desir'd his Pardon: The good Indulgent Duke o'erflow'd with joy to see his Daughter: her Pardon easily upon her Lips he seal'd, and raising her from off the ground, cried *Welcome my dear Aspatia*. With no less joy the *Marquess de Leganes* saw and receiv'd *Malantius*, and declar'd Heaven shew'd so strong a hand in all these Revolutions, that they were both convinc'd 'twas so decreed by Providence, to make the Event successful to them all. During this time *Carace* was all Anxiety, striving to bear an equal part before her Lover, whose Eyes she found more lovely now than ever. *Clauvius* to long stood

From their first entrance her Eyes were

fixt upon him, and hardly could she stop the violent sallies of her Jealousie, altho' she knew *Aspatia* was his Sister, which they had been inform'd of on their Journey, the Fame of so remarkable a thing having rung throughout the Kingdom.

Curious was the Interview between *Frederick* and his Sister; his Passion now was nobly turn'd to Friendship, and he could gaze upon her without love; he confess'd the Pain and misery that all along had waited on that Flame, had sufficiently reveng'd his Baseness to *Canace*, whom he still own'd the Mistress of his Soul; but Revenge, a rash Vow, and the Contempt she had baffled him with (as he imagin'd) made him so violent in his last Amour; but now he finds 'twas manag'd by an unseen Power, who by hidden ways, beyond our comprehension, easily brings the darkest things to light. *That power* (replied *Aspatia*) *we are all oblig'd to, who by this Discovery has prevented a monstrous Mischief, that must have ensued; and now there remains no more to complete an universal Happiness but the fair, the constant, the virtuous Canace.* At this *Don Frederick* blush'd, and sighing said, *Tho' I can love sincerely none but her, yet by a direful Imprecation I have rashly made, Gods, don't I live to speak it! she never can be mine.* *Canace*, who had heard with pleasure the most part of this Discourse, felt so violent an effect of Passion at this Part, that, unable to

repel

repel its force, she fell into a Swoon. All run to the assistance of the young Cavalier, and wonder'd at the occasion of his sudden Illness.

Aspatia thinking it a fair opportunity to discover her, readily reveals both Person and Disease; he was sensibly concern'd, the Company joyning in her behalf, representing her matchless Love and Constancy, he took her in his Arms, (who was but just reviv'd) and pressing her upon his panting Breast, with a Sigh that almost burst his Heart, he cry'd, *Unless 'tis possible to call my Friend Alcidas from the Grave, I cannot wed Canace.*

Adrain, who till now had been a bare Spectator, thought it high time to act his part; and in order to it, having demanded an attention, pull'd off a Beard and false Eyebrows, which hitherto he had wore for a Disguise; and with a Smile took *Frederick* by one Hand, and *Canace* by the other, told them, That Heaven, in regard of their mutual Affection, had rais'd *Alcidas* from the Dead to do that Friendly Office for them. All that knew him formerly were convinc'd 'twas the same, and was more astonished at this Adventure, then all that had happened to them before; but *Frederick* still doubtful of his good Fortune, had scarce Faith to credit what he saw, not daring to give way to any Joy, lest he should meet a Disappointment. *Alcidas* observing this, run to embrace him, and with a Voice that flow'd

128 **To be in distress or,**

his mighty Joy, (he cry'd) Doubt not, my
dear Octavio, for now you hold within your
Arms your Real former Friend Alcidas, who
now is thoroughly satisfy'd of the Contrition, for
that unhappy Deed which Love, Despair, and
Jealousie provoke you to; and since I have been
the fatal Cause of your Misfortunes, I think
it now my part to ask a Pardon. At this Fre-
derick being convinc'd, tho' with no small
wonder receiv'd him with all the Joy and
Satisfaction that Friendship, Love, or Gra-
titude could move; here all those nice Pun-
ctilio's that Emulation, Love, or Honour
could inspire, did pass between these Gene-
rous, Noble Souls: Thus linkt in one ano-
ther's Arms with strict Embraces, they there
confirm'd an everlasting Friendship.

This Transport being over, Alcidas by
the Company was prest to tell the Story of
this strange Escape; who (after some Cer-
emony to the Presence, and a particular Ad-
dress to Candor, (whom he intreated for a
Reconciliation) he gratify'd with this Re-
lation: as now y^e remem^r and want not that it

The History of Alcidas.

After the fatal Blow I receiv'd under Ca-
ndor's Window, by the Deluge of Blood
that perused it, I was soon disabled from
making any defence, but fell on the Spot,
and

and lay groveling in my Gore : I had just
 sence enough left to hear the unhappy Au-
 thor lament my Fall, who soon after retir'd,
 leaving me for Dead. The Corigidore and
 his Son going their Round, perceived the
 Body, which knowing, and finding that I
 yet breath'd, out of Care for my Preserva-
 tion, convey'd me to his own House, with-
 out raising an Alarm, which would have ta-
 ken up too much time ; they stop'd my
 Blood, and I (after some other Applicati-
 ons) recover'd my Senses, and immediately
 demanded, If they had secured any Body
 upon suspicion ; they answer'd, *No* ; but
 excus'd that Neglect from their Industry to
 preserve my Life ; I easily forgave them,
 and having understood that none knew of
 my Misfortune but themselves ; I Brib'd
 them to Secrecie, desiring to continue con-
 ceal'd in their House, till I saw what this
 unlucky Accident would produce, promising,
 if I was likely to Die, to discover as much
 as should take the Guilt off them ; and if I
 liv'd to advance their Fortunes : They had
 formerly been Servants to my Family, and
 knew my Capacity of performing what I
 promised : Upon this Score (tho under pre-
 sence of a powerful Ascendant I had over
 them) they swore a solemn Secrecy to my
 Commands, and likewise procur'd me a
 Chirurgeon, Skilful and very Faithful ; thus
 I remain'd secure from suspicion in their
 House ;

House; and was carefully conceal'd, during the publick Search: After which, happily recovering (tho not without great difficulty) my Eyes were open to the Follies of the World: I abhor'd my extravagant Passion, looking upon it as a vast Crime, being a Breach of our most sacred and solemn Friendship, and the fatal Cause of those many Troubles thar ensued. This moral Reflection wrought so effectually with me, that from that moment I resolv'd to quit the Vanity of this World, and dedicate all my Love to Heaven, and the Remainder of my Days to the Expiation of my poudrous Sins: 'twas some Pleasure to me also when I reflected what a hearty Attonement this would prove for the Wrongs and Injuries I had done to my dear *Octavio*. I defer'd the Execution of my Vow some time, lest some unhappy Wretch might suffer for my Death, were not I there to clear him: but all prospect of Discovery being over, and the Unfortunate *Alcidas* almost forgot, I found it a convenient time to Transport my self to Portugal, where I entred my self in a Convent of *Franciscans*, and in due time took the Habit and Order. Having left a Charge with the Gorgidore not to reveal any knowledge of me without my Order, unless the hazard of any Man's Life requir'd the Discovery which Commands I find he has been very punctual in observing. And thus you have heard

The Lucky Discovery. 133

heard the Fate of *Alcidas*, whom Heaven miraculously has preserv'd; no more to interpose between your Joys, or be a Plague to any of your Hopes, but plac'd in a Station, luckily to reconcile all Differences, to unite mutual Love, and cement your reciprocal Contracts for ever.

The Affability, Bravery, and Zeal wherewith *Alcidas* deliver'd this Discourse, and the Pleasure he shew'd, in hopes to be (after all the Misfortunes he had caus'd) the happy Instrument to reconcile them, mov'd every Heart with an extraordinary sence of his Merit, and from the sincere Dictates of Love and Esteem, each address'd him a particular Congratulation; their Joy was unlimited, and there required no Persuasions to make an unanimous Assent to gratifie their Tenderest Wishes; the fierce Sallies of our Heroes youthful Bloods could hardly be restrained within Bounds, nor could the subtlest Artifice conceal the Ladies Transports, whilst their becoming Blushes betray'd their Thoughts, and their dancing Eyes discover'd their Impatience for the approaching Happiness; nothing but the Viscount's Illness was an Obstacle to their Bliss, for whose Recovery they waited; but he, the only Unfortunate, having had the Pleasure of hearing this Relation, and the boundless Joy of once again seeing and receiving to his Bosome his dear *Canace*, on whom he confer'd ten thousand Blessings; he had the Satisfaction to depart this Life in Peace, loaden with Honour, and with Years, leaving *Frederick* and she, the happy Possessors of a vast Inheritance.

Sorrow for this Loss had something eclipsed the

Tranquility of every Breast, and deser'd their Joys, to pay a mournful Tribute to the blest Memory of the Noble Deceas'd, living in as much Comfort as the occasion would permit, till a just time was expired for their Grief, when they consented to enter the Lists of Matrimony, and Adrian perform'd the Nuptial-Rites.

I.

Now does each Bridegroom's Face appear
In Joy, which their warm Hearts express,
Waiting for That they purchas'd dear,
And Sighing, Languish to possess.

II.

The trembling Brides with wishing Eyes,
By equal Love and Teats oppress,
Long to secure the Noble Prize,
But dare not, dare not think the rest.

III.

Thus to Compsethe cruel Pain,
That Dying Lovers oft endure,
When all Endeavour is in vain,
Hymen effects the mighty Cure.

The Ceremony was very magnificent, and at Bed-time Adrian confess'd, That his Soul was so absolutely resign'd to Heaven, that he could see his Mistress in the Arms of his Friend without regret. Where we will leave both Couple, 'risposable, to Repose.

The Curtain is drawn, the rest must not be known,
For as we move, the time may be your own.